

THE
GLORY of GOD
CONSIDERED,
IN REFERENCE TO
MAN'S FALL
AND
RECOVERY.

Seane 92

PSALM lxi. 4. *Then I restored that which I took not away.*



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M.DCC.LXXXVI.

THE GLORY OF GOD

CONFERRED

IN 1812

MANUAL



RECOVERY

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may not be improper to inform those, into whose hands the ensuing papers may come, that love to my deceased brother, by whom they were penned, the request of his surviving friends, and a sincere desire of promoting Christian knowledge, are the chief motives of their publication.

The Author had good natural and acquired abilities; but was far more distinguished by his piety, benevolence, humility, and unblemished life and conversation. Few men, in so limited a circle as that in which he moved, have been more esteemed in life, or lamented in death. Having much time on his hands, he employed it in writing these, and other treatises of a similar nature, for his own benefit and amusement: and the attentive and serious reader, it is presumed, will find such a vein of piety and Christian experience in the work here presented to him, as will amply recompence the defects he may observe in the style and manner of composition. The subjects insisted on are interesting and important, calculated to edify and comfort all serious unprejudiced readers. They chiefly respect the knowledge of Christ, in his divine person, offices, atonement, salvation, and glory; the necessity of faith in Christ; and the means by which it is begun, carried on, and perfected.

*fected. It was the Author's sentiment, that the Gospel
 Call to the chief of sinners to believe in Christ, and come
 to him for acceptance with God, without any previous
 qualifications, was every way consistent with the nature
 of justification; the subjects of which, as described by
 St. Paul, Rom. iv. 3, 4, 5. are not the righteous, but
 the ungodly. From this consideration he shews, that all
 persons, solicitous to obtain salvation, have encouragement
 to come to Christ, under the deepest sense of their guilt
 and unworthiness; he gives them some particular direc-
 tions how to come, and points out to believers the means
 by which their faith and comfort may be increased and
 established. That these were not subjects of mere specula-
 tion to the Author, but important realities, he gave suf-
 ficient evidence, by the influence they had on his mind,
 not only in life, but even in his dying moments, causing
 him to triumph over the King of Terrors, and rejoice in
 the prospect of eternal glory. That they may have the
 same effect upon the mind of the reader,*

Is the sincere prayer of

The Editor,

PLYMOUTH,
Oct. 1786.

P. GIBBS.

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T H E
GLORY of GOD
CONSIDERED, &c.

C H A P. I.

*Job xxii. 2. Can a man be profitable unto God, as
 he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?*

THE term, or expression Glory, signifies lustre, brightness and excellency; or what exceeds in weight or quantity; which when applied to God, is expressive, not only of the manifestation and display of his divine perfections, but more properly of the attributes themselves peculiar to his nature: To this purpose the Psalmist. *Psalms* xix. 1. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy Work.* All the creatures which have already existed, or ever shall exist, have not added, neither shall add in the least degree to, or take from the glory and excellency of his divine nature, perfections and attributes; because he is the infinite and self-existent Jehovah,

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and

and therefore not capable of alteration and mutability: The mighty operations of his power, either in things intelligent, or unintelligent, were not necessary to render him more happy; nor will the endless blasphemies of lost men and angels detract from his felicity and blessedness: If so, well might holy David say *Psalms* xvi. 2. *My goodness extendeth not to thee.* Nay, though considered as the words of Christ himself, (of whom David was a type) in reference to the whole work of redemption, we may safely conclude they were uttered with the utmost propriety; since the Lord is perfect in himself, and the spring and author of all good. These considerations beget in the minds even of the blessed angels above, the profoundest reverence, and the most ardent love and gratitude, in that the infinitely great and glorious Jehovah should condescend to listen to their praises, or regard their services; wherefore man in this state of sin and misery, to think that he can profit God by any service that he can do, is the highest presumption and folly; of which all, who do so, will be convinced when the self-sufficient, and independent Jehovah shall put that awful question to them, *Job* xli. 11. *Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him?* Reader! what thinkest thou of thyself? Art thou one of those, who imagine themselves independent of God? Dost thou suppose, touching the good thou dost,

dost, that he was not the author of it? Thou sayest perhaps, that it is inconsistent with the will of a rational creature, not to be at liberty; and that the nature thereof is, to be self-inclined: If this be thy opinion hearken to what an inspired penman saith *Phillip. ii. 12, 13. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* But if thou art one, whom the Lord has taught, thou wilt say in the words of inspiration, *Rom. xi. 36. Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever.*

CHAP. II.

THE GLORIFICATION OF GOD.

Proverbs xvi. 4. The Lord hath made all things for himself.

THAT the Lord cannot be profited by any creature whatever hath already been proved. Why then, think you, did he command into existence the creatures of his power? If without any design; wisdom itself is degraded below the meanest of rational beings. If with; certainly the end decreed must be most worthy the God of wisdom; and expressive of his infinity. If we be still at a loss to say, what the design might be;

truth, or more properly the God of truth, will satisfy us. "The Lord hath made all things for himself," is the answer. How for himself if he be not profited thereby? Why. The answer is plain viz. To declare and set forth his excellencies and perfections; to make known his attributes and properties; and to display to intelligent creatures his lustre, brightness, and splendor, in proportion to their ability and capacity to conceive, or apprehend it. Were mankind in their searches and researches into divine truths, and especially those which relate to their eternal welfare, to fix this point well in their minds; it would under the influence of the Spirit of the Lord, mightily help them to an acquaintance with their own hearts, the great evil of their sin both by nature and practice; lead them to condemn themselves before the Lord on account thereof, and be a guide and preservative in determining the foundation of their hope of future blessedness. Whether we believe it, or not, it is an undoubted truth, that every fundamental error, touching the salvation of the soul, dishonors the perfections and attributes of God; and consequently the person who maintains it, does what in him lies, to frustrate the end of his creation, and brings the matter to this awful issue, if he be saved, God must be dishonored. But to return. All that an infinite being can receive from creatures, is a due acknowledgment
of

of his excellencies, according to the measure of their discovery. Wherefore to pay no attention thereto, argues the grossest stupidity and blindness. How does this reflect on infinite wisdom, as if the Lord's design deserved not our notice ! Nay, such inattention is a theft of the worst sort, even of his glory ; and the language of such a conduct, is even blasphemy, if not downright atheism. Should not these considerations put us on the inquiry into our own conduct ? Should not each ask his soul and say ? O, my soul ! and hast thou glorified God ? If not, to what end dost thou live ? Has God given thee a being to no purpose ? Or art thou independent of him ? Hast thou answered the end of thy creation, and manifested thyself worthy of thy existence ? This thou canst not assert ; because thou art a sinner, and hast come short of the glory of God. But say, art thou convinced of thy lamentable condition, and dost thou see thyself incapable of making the great God of heaven and earth restitution for the injury done him ? If thou dost ; I would yet ask thee, what thinkest thou of Christ ? Dost thou suppose, that he as the great mediator and day's-man hath glorified Jehovah ? O, consider then for whom he did it, even for sinners : for such as thou art ! O fly then unto him ! Take refuge in him ; which if thou truly shalt do, then wilt thou to eternity shew forth the praises of him that created

created thee: and instead of cursing, wilt for ever bless the day of thine existence.

CHAP. III.

GOD IS GLORIFIED BY THE INANIMATE, AND IRRATIONAL CREATION.

Psaln xix. 1. The heavens declare the Glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy work.

Psaln cxlv. 10. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord.

GOD may be glorified in a two-fold respect. First, By the evidence of his excellency inherent in his operations.

Secondly, By his intelligent creatures perceiving, admiring, and declaring his doings.

In the first sense we are to understand the figurative expressions contained in the above scriptures: for the inanimate and brutal creation cannot praise the Lord in the same manner as angels and men may, and ought: the praise of the former is objective, that is, they contain sufficient matter of praise: they speak aloud to men and angels the power, wisdom, and goodness of God. Not only the wonderful and stupendous orbs above us, but even the meanest insect which crawls on our earth, speaks aloud the glory of its Creator, in displaying his amazing power,

power, and declaring his consummate wisdom, both in their being, and utility.

Secondly, God may be glorified by his intelligent creatures perceiving, admiring, and declaring his doings, viz. his noble acts in creation: for that is the subject we are now upon. Were no rational creature ever to have existed, it would be hard to say, how the unintelligent creation could have glorified their Maker; as there would have been no eye properly to have beheld his excellencies manifested thereby; and no ear to have heard their loud and lofty praises. If so, how then ought man to attend to their speech! how ought he to observe their instruction! if he be altogether careless in this respect, does he not dishonor the Lord of nature, and tacitly affirm there is no God? For if they be created to a certain end, that end must be worthy of the divine wisdom: and what can that be but the revelation of their divine Maker? For as an inimitable painting sets forth the ingenuity of its artist; or a superb and elegant edifice, the extraordinary skill of its architect; so do the inanimate and irrational creatures display the wisdom and goodness of God, but with this difference, that, as the former may be expressive of the utmost of human skill and ability; the latter declares, but in part, the divine excellency and power: however, if thereby, the perfections of God be declared; the man who wilfully

willfully shuts his eyes and ears, though he may not do it with his lips, yet by his practice boldly declares there is no God: thus did not David: for says he *Psaln viii. 3, 4. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?* and in the last verse crys out, *O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* But though men may sinfully disregard the glory of God in the creation, yet doubtless the blessed angels pry into those mysteries of divine power; and continually extol the infinite wisdom of God therein manifested.

CHAP. IV.

THE GLORY OF GOD DISPLAYED IN THE RATIONAL CREATION.

John viii. 44. And abode not in the truth.

Genesis i. 27. So God created man in his own image.

FROM the scriptures here prefixed we gather, there was not an angel in heaven when this glorious rank of beings were first created but what was holy; also, that Adam when he came out of his Maker's hands, and all his posterity considered in him were upright and spotless: to suppose the contrary, would be casting dishonor
on

on the glorious Jehovah; and impeaching, either his wisdom, power, or goodness in the formation of the most excellent part of his creation: hence it follows, that Adam before his fall, as well as angels, possessed not only a natural, but moral ability to know, love, and serve God. To suppose any created being capable of knowledge, love, and service, and yet these faculties unemployed in reference to God himself, even to their utmost extent; or employed on any object in preference to him, is the very nature of sin, dishonorable to the Lord and renders the creature vain: therefore the display not only of the divine power and wisdom, but of the holiness, love and goodness of God was designed in the existence of rational beings. With respect to the display of the divine power, let it be observed, that the angelic world was formed before the inanimate creation: and in those bright intelligences first shone abroad the divine omnipotency, being in measure conscious of the immateriality of their nature, and acquainted with the faculties and powers, wherewith they were endowed, they both actively and passively praised their maker. David could say, *Psal. cxxxix. 14. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* Shall we then suppose the Lord had no praise of this kind from angels previous to material existences? Again. This attribute was glorified by the angelic host when the

material worlds first arose into being, as is evident from the Lord's own testimony. *Job xxxviii. 6, 7. Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof? when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.* If in the formation of the earth they glorified divine power, why not also in the creation of the vast universe?

That the excellency of divine wisdom was also herein exhibited is manifest from the words of inspiration. *Psal. civ. 24. O Lord how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.* Consequently the angels of God's power, were endued with wisdom, that, they might wonder at, admire, and extol the infinite wisdom of God, discovered not only in their own created excellencies; but also shining forth in the heavens and earth, and the variety of creatures, with which the earth was replenished: if Adam could readily name the animal creation, according to their several natures; *Gen. ii. 19*, doubtless angels fell not short of him in wisdom, and penetration. Again, That divine holiness was to be magnified in the rational creation is plain, hence the angels are called holy angels. *Matt. xxv. 31. When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him.* The want of holiness in those that fell, hath changed them into devils. 'Tis an observation of *Charnock* on the divine Attributes, pag. 500, that

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“The angels are not pure in his sight, because,
 “though they love God (which is a principle of
 “holiness) as much as they can, yet not so much,
 “as he deserves; God having an infinite knowledge
 “of himself, and consequently an infinite holi-
 “ness without any defect, because he loves himself
 “according to the vastness of his own amiableness;
 “which no finite being can.” But the impurity
 here mentioned is no sinful deficiency; inasmuch
 as their moral rectitude is equal to their natural
 powers. Hence the display of divine love: be-
 cause in creatures so formed, it must shine forth
 in amazing splendor; for happiness is concreated
 with their very existence, and sweetly harmoni-
 ous, to advance the honor of the divine excellen-
 cies, more than possibly could be done by the
 whole unintelligent creation. Therefore their
 existence is expressive of the infinite goodness of
 God, who made so wonderfully to meet, even his
 own glory and their happiness. What has been
 said in this chapter of angels, may with propriety
 be spoken of our first parents. Though Adam in
 a state of innocence dwelt not in the mansions
 above; yet he was as capable of glorifying God in
 his measure, as the heavenly inhabitants; wanting
 no knowledge of his maker necessary to that end,
 but always filled with the most suitable perceptions,
 and apprehensions of his love, and loveliness, ne-
 cessary to that purpose. He clearly perceived the

divine excellencies shining forth in the creatures around him, as appears by the names he gave those the Lord brought him; and without doubt had the most perfect and abiding sense, and approbation of his duty, and obligation to his great creator and benefactor. But say reader, Is this the present case with his posterity? Is it the case with thee? Peradventure, thou didst never put such a question to thyself, supposing, that God does not expect to find what we all lost in Adam; but will be satisfied with our mean and sinful service; however I must ask again, If this be allowed, how is God to be glorified? Can that nature, which is totally dead in sin set forth the praise of infinite purity? Does thy understanding always conceive of God, thyself, and the whole of God's will with that supreme delight and pleasure, that his law requires? Art thou able in all cases and conditions to judge aright of thy duty? Is thy memory capable at all times of retaining, what relates to God's glory, and thy obligations? What are thy thoughts? Is thy imagination always the subject of the most sublime, suitable, and seasonable thoughts of the greatness, holiness, love and goodness of God, of the things which relate to his image and authority, and that contribute to set forth his perfections? Was it never tainted with pride, unbelief, lasciviousness, envy, covetousness? Did thy conscience never upbraid thee?

No,

No, not even when thou apprehendedst thyself ready to enter into an eternal world? Couldst thou then think of God with the greatest delight?

Is thy will wholly engaged in obedience; not the least backwardness and indifference attending it; but with the most consummate delight, dost thou discharge every duty of thought, word, and deed, without failure or mistake? If thou canst not answer these questions in the affirmative, how thinkest thou to answer God when he shall question thee; whose knowledge of his own law far transcends that of any human creature in this present sinful estate? But if thou art convinced, that thy nature is now like a corrupt stock, which can bring forth nought but corrupt fruit: that thou art both in a condemned and helpless condition, under the wrath of God, and without strength; say not, it is impossible God should be glorified, and thou eternally happy; but rather search and see, whether infinite wisdom hath not devised some method, whereby thou mayest be saved, and yet all the honor due to Jehovah maintained.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THE AUTHORITY AND GOODNESS OF GOD
 MANIFESTED IN THE COVENANT OF WORKS
 WITH ADAM AND HIS POSTERITY.

Dan. iv. 34. Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.

Matt. xix. 17. If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments.

THAT the Lord had a right to appoint our first parents some test of their love and fidelity we cannot doubt; if we consider the relation they stood in to him: he was their creator, they his creatures: he their benefactor, they the recipients of his benefits: he their father, they the children: he their king, they his subjects. If this had not been done, how would the majesty and authority of God appeared? Can we suppose, that the Lord would have brought creatures into being, to subvert the very end of their existence? Is not his glory (as before proved) the rule of his actions? or in other words, has not the eternal Jehovah created all things for himself? To have constituted Adam independent of his maker would have been injurious to his authority. Even our fallen reason shudders at such a thought; and cannot

cannot admit the possibility of it: but hear what the Lord saith, *Isaiah* xlii. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give unto another.* But some persons may reply, we grant all this, yet we doubt this point, that Adam represented his posterity: for can that be subject to any authority which hath no existence? To answer this question I would further observe, that the Lord not only appointed a test to Adam, which he might have done, without granting him a promise of any further blessedness, though he should prove obedient. But secondly, he entered into covenant with him and his posterity. Herein the goodness of God is magnified: because, had not Adam transgressed, both he and they would, without doubt, have been translated from an earthly to a celestial blessedness: this is evident from the words of our Lord above prefixed, *If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments,* and from many other passages of Scripture; which federal representation, I imagine, none would have found fault with, had Adam been faithful. However, that the covenant of works was of this nature appears plain from divine testimony, *Rom. v. 12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, or in whom all have sinned,* which being proved is a sufficient answer to the objection: because the Lord can do nothing inconsistent

consistent with his own glory. Though mankind in general are very apt to find fault with this part of the divine economy, yet in the transactions of civil matters they pursue the very same mode of conduct. Do not men chuse a few to represent an whole nation? Are not laws enacted by which many unborn are affected? Or are the electors the whole of a nation; or a part only? Yet, who finds fault in this respect? Wherefore, we do well humbly to explore divine truths, and not to measure them by our carnal reason: for even this wonderful, and mysterious transaction, might under a divine influence be very profitable; were we to ponder it with an eye to God's glory, and our own spiritual good. Because by comparing that which God required of us in our first head; with what we are at present even in heart and life? perhaps we might be convinced of our spiritual misery and helplessness, be led to deplore our sad condition and circumstances, be induced to admit of being saved by the righteousness of Jesus; seeing we are condemned by the sin of Adam; and acknowledge, that if the one will terminate in the glory of justice in a way of punishment; the other will be for the glory of mercy, consistent with holiness and justice, in a way of salvation.

CHAPTER VI.

IF GOD BE NOT GLORIFIED IN MAN'S OBEDIENCE, HE WILL BE GLORIFIED IN HIS PUNISHMENT OF HIS DISOBEDIENCE.

Gen. ii. 17. For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

HEREBY we may learn God's immediate, and awful denunciation of death on our first parents, in case they should eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which he had forbidden them to eat of: comprehending a far greater evil, than the death of the body. Not only were both our first parents personally concerned in this awful declaration, but mankind in general, or the whole human race, were to be held innocent, or condemned, according to the obedience or disobedience of the first man. Therefore the execution of the sentence, death, took place upon himself, and posterity, immediately on his violation of the command, not to eat of that tree. By death we are to understand, 1st. death temporal; 2d. spiritual; 3d. eternal. That the death of the body was in consequence of Adam's transgression, is so universally acknowledged (except by a few Socinians) that it would be to very little purpose to

spend time to prove it. But because experience teacheth that many die, who never committed actual sin, as well as others, therefore, these men have asserted, that Adam was mortal before the fall; and not in consequence of his first transgression: the reason they alledge is, because his nature in innocency was perishable: this we allow in one respect, though not in another. If he had been above the power of death, independent of God's decree, what belongs to God might have been attributed unto him: but Paul says, speaking of God, 1 Tim. vi. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light*: however if Adam's immortality was God's appointment, whilst he continued in a state of integrity, then his nature was impassable during that state: for all creatures, are neither less, nor more, than what God makes them: they subsist not of themselves when created; but, that same power which brought them into existence continues them in it: wherefore as by the decree of God, he was at first immortal, likewise, by his appointment he became mortal; and began to feel the harbingers of death within him: and no longer exempted from its stroke than the Lord pleased. If this be the case with every one of his posterity, how is it we lay it no more to heart? Are we not as unconcerned, as if we were to live here always? What, do we think we have no more existence when we die? If so, we might well say

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2 *Cor.* xv. 32. *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* Secondly, By death we are also to understand spiritual death: this is nothing less than the loss of the divine image, which took place immediately on Adam's first offence: *Gen.* iii. 7. *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked:* being convinced of their sin and guilt, yet as appears from verses 12, 13, very ready to make sinful excuses: in chap. v. ver. 8. it is said, *And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, and after his own image; and called his name Seth;* which compared with the words of Christ, *John* iii. 6, 7. will plainly prove the point in hand: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." Hence it is manifest beyond contradiction, that Adam's nature immediately on his first offence; and the nature of every individual of his offspring, are in a moral sense exactly similar. Did he, by that transgression, fall under the displeasure of God? So did we. Was the consequence thereof a loss of the divine image? This took effect, not only on him, but us also. Did his understanding become dark, his memory treacherous respecting soul concerns, his imagination polluted, his conscience stupid, and erroneous, his will perverse and stubborn, and his affections disorderly and irregular? This

is exactly the case with us. So that the guilt incurred by his fall is punished with the loss of that rectitude, which might have prevented both him, and us, from adding sin to sin: wherefore no man as he comes into the world, but will unavoidably sin, and do nothing but sin. All his seemingly righteous acts will be all unrighteous: for as the stream cannot rise above its source, neither can the corrupt heart of man bring forth any good fruit. Were we duly apprized hereof, it might repress much that self-confidence to which we are all so prone: to be justified by the law, is to fulfil it: but if we violate it, in thought, word, and deed at all times, and on all occasions, and cannot but do so, (our very nature being cursed by it) how should any supposed conformity thereto qualify us for salvation through Christ Jesus? If we be dead in sin by nature, and not in a diseased state only; and if the law be not a ministration of life, but of death, it will follow, no convictions of the law can alter our state: wherefore, when the Lord the spirit, through the gospel giveth life; be the man's convictions what they may, or his legal righteousness ever so splendid in the eyes of men, he finds such a soul, not the subject of spiritual life in a very small measure, but absolutely dead in trespasses and sins, and not the least grain of goodness in it. Again. They who are under the law, are under the power of a corrupt nature: this

this appears from various parts of scripture. In Rom. chap. vii. ver. 4, 5. the apostle shews the difference between the renewed, and unrenewed man, and the causes of it. 10. "Wherefore my brethren, (says he) ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead; that we might bring forth fruit unto God," Rom. vii. 4. evidently implying, that no fruit can be brought forth unto God, until we be dead unto the law, and the law unto us: for if we have no faith in Christ, who hath satisfied the law; though we should even despair of ever attaining righteousness and life by it, yet the law hath still the same claim on us: but he adds, for when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death: evincing, that the law only irritates natural corruption, to produce more abundantly the fruit of sin in heart and life: wherefore the apostle, chap. vi. 14. says, *For sin shall not have the dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* From all which, it is clearly evident, that if God's love be not manifested to us, we cannot love him: that where no true manifestation thereof exists, in that heart sin reigns: and also, that as the reign of sin began with the displeasure of God, so the destruction of its reigning power must be the fruit of his being reconciled.

reconciled. By unbelief we first fell in Adam; by faith in Christ only, are we recovered. As unbelief is the root of all other vices, so faith in Christ is the root of all other graces. By unbelief we are independent and presumptuous, by faith in God through Christ we are dependent upon, and attribute all unto him. Unbelief puts the crown upon the head of the creature, but faith gives the whole glory only to the mediator: wherefore, where no true gospel faith is, there the power of God is not manifested to renew and sanctify. Thirdly, Death being the curse of the law, cannot but include eternal death; that is, an everlasting separation from divine favor, and an enduring to eternity God's wrath and indignation, as the just reward of sin and transgression. Had not eternal death been contained in the threatening, we might well suppose spiritual death no part of the punishment for Adam's first sin: because they who are spiritually dead, sin with pleasure. But if divine justice not only arraigns man for Adam's first offence, but also for sinful and corrupt nature, the consequence thereof, together with all its sinful progeny, in heart, lip, and life, then is spiritual death a very awful punishment; and proves the great malignity of that first offence; as also, of every individual act of sin; whether of an internal, or external nature.— That eternal death is contained in the threatening,

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is obvious from divers parts of God's word, consisting first in a privation of eternal life. Secondly in the infliction of eternal punishment. That it consists in the privation of eternal life will appear, if we consult *Rom. v. 18, 19.* Therefore, saith the apostle, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life: for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous. As life here mentioned includes both life spiritual, and eternal, being the fruit of justification, consequently, not sinners through Adam, but the righteous by Christ, shall inherit eternal life. Again, *John* in his first epistle, *v. 12.* saith, He that hath the Son, hath life: and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. If then life be alone through Christ, eternal life must have been before forfeited, not only by actual offenders, but even by them, who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; for it pleased the Father to reconcile in Christ all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven, *Col. i. 20.* Hence it is conclusive; that privation of eternal life is comprehended in this divine threatening.

Secondly, That the infliction of eternal pain or punishment is comprized under the expression death, will appear, if we consult *Ephes. ii. 3.* For the

apostle speaking of himself, as well as those to whom he wrote, saith "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." If by nature all were children of wrath, then certainly they are so, on account of Adam's disobedience: yea, and must suffer eternal wrath, unless chosen in Christ. But it may be objected; that, though the divine displeasure be eternal, and the objects of it be punished with everlasting punishment, yet, this arises not from the nature of sin, considered as an individual act; but from the constant, and unremit-
ted series of those acts to eternity; so that, had it been possible for Adam after the commission of his first offence to have remained holy in his nature and practice, that offence would not have deserved everlasting misery; because his acts of righteousness before his fall, and his act of disobedience when he fell, were both the acts of a creature: wherefore the former could not glorify the majesty, holiness, and goodness of God; neither could the latter dishonor God in these persecutions according to the infinitude of their nature, the acts being finite. To investigate this very important point demands our utmost attention, seeing that many from a wrong view thereof, have contented themselves with a Savior less than infi-

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nite in his nature and dignity. It is to be questioned, whether a learned and intelligent person can be found, who denying the proper divinity of Christ will confess at the same time, that a single act of sin deserves everlasting punishment. To suppose sin cannot be an infinite evil, because no creature can perform an infinite act, is not to the purpose: for neither righteousness, nor sin is of a physical, but a moral nature: for if we allow it to be of a physical nature, how shall we maintain the dependence of all creatures on their Creator? Since it is said *Acts xvii. 28.* that, *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* The act of any creature, were it subject to no law, could neither be good, nor evil; yet it would not cease to be an act. Though we will and do, we do not so of ourselves independent of God, seeing these are natural acts of the mind and body; for should we claim this power ourselves, we should attribute to the creature what is essential to the infinite Jehovah; therefore they who conclude sin to be physical, fall into Fatalism, and cannot extricate themselves from the charge of making God the author of it, without making the creature independent of him. Wherefore sin is not a substance, but an accident; nor as such, of a positive but privative nature. First, sin is not a substance for the reasons before assigned. Neither man, nor angel cease to be such, because they are sinful:

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were it otherwise, Adam after his fall must have been another man, than what he was before it; and when renewed, (as we doubt not but he is now in glory) he would not have been the same man he was, either before or after the fall. — Righteousness in the creature is no substance, tho' not a privation as sin is: for the former is from God; the latter without him. Wherefore to say that an infinite act of righteousness was necessary in the creature to glorify the infinite majesty, holiness, and goodness of God; or of sin to dishonor these his infinite excellencies, is talking without proper thought and reflexion. Let us then enquire what sin is; and whence it derives its evil nature.

First, What is sin? 'Tis replied,

Secondly, That it is an accident, which attends the inward operations of the mind; and from thence in man the outward actions of the body; and implies some rule, to which these ought to be conformed, nevertheless are not: hence it may be divided into positive and negative. Sin positive, is when any act of the mind or body is contrary to the law; and sin negative, when that is not performed which is required; or more properly, it is so called because it is a violation of the command or law of God: for no rational creature can do amiss, if the divine law find no fault with him. All our offences committed
against

against one another, be they of what nature they may, are sins against God himself: therefore all obedience to man should be for the Lord's sake; otherwise we set the creature in the place of him. Our next enquiry is, Whence does sin derive its evil nature? As it has been already observed, that sin is not the action of an intelligent creature but the form of the action; therefore it is moral; and its evil is partly objective: which point being once fixed, the measure of that evil will be in proportion to the dignity and excellence of the object, against which it is committed. In respect to human government, this rule always takes place. An offence given to a stranger, a fellow subject or equal, a brother, a parent, a person in office under the prince, a judge, or the prince himself, carries a less, or greater degree of guilt, according to the relation, or dignity of the person, or object offended: how great the guilt then, of an offence against God! Now if the evil of sin, (I speak not of any particular sin, but what action soever will bear that character) takes its rise from its being committed against God, then is it infinite, since the object thereof, is infinite. Indeed there may be more or less obliquity in different sinful acts when compared, or according to the circumstances attending the same sinful act; yet this doth not remove infinitude from the evil of the least sinful act: but you will say, if there be acts of sin,

which have different degrees of evil, when it is subjective also, and may be more than infinite. To this I reply.

First, Sin is sin; as it is a coming short of the law, an aberration from the scope or mark, a passing over the bounds fixed: and in proportion as it exceeds in these respects, so is its obliquity more or less; now in this respect it is subjective, being the form of the natural act, and consequently adhering to it; but the evil thereof is entirely objective, and in measure according to that obliquity: for what is any law without a law-giver? An offence is nothing without there be a person offended.

Secondly, Although every offence against God deserves an infinite punishment, yet the desert of sinners is heightened, according to the number, and obliquity of their offences; in which assertion there is no impropriety, for the law in respect to its commands, and prohibitions is limited: wherefore the violations of it must be so too. A perpetuity of punishment is due to every offence; but the degree of punishment is limited, according to the number, and atrociousness of offences; for we assert not that sinners deserve an infinity of punishment, both intensively, and everlastingly.— These points are not without proof, see *Matt. xxv. 46. These shall go away into everlasting punishment.*— (viz.) All who are not the blessed of the Father;

all

all for whom an inheritance was not prepared:—
 Nevertheless, can we conclude that though the
 persons here spoken of be alike guilty in Adam,
 and fallen alike in him; yet there will be found
 no difference among them through their actual
 sins, or that some will not deserve a greater de-
 gree of wrath than others? If you say they will
 then it is apparent from the text, that even one
 act of sin merits a perpetuity of suffering; and
 consequently the death threatened on Adam's
 transgression includes an eternity of misery:—
 Again Compare the passage last quoted with
Luke xlv. 47, 48. *And that servant which knew his
 lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did accord-
 ing to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But
 he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes,
 shall be beaten with few stripes.* Here a difference is
 affirmed even by truth itself, touching degrees of
 torment in a future state. But if any one should still
 doubt of what is here advanced, let him answer
 that question put by Moses. *Psalm lxx. 11.* *Who
 knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to
 thy fear, so is thy wrath.* If it be possible therefore
 to fear an eternity of God's displeasure for one
 single offence, and such a measure of divine and
 eternal wrath, as may be in proportion to the
 number and atrocity of crimes committed, who
 will be so bold as to say such fears exceed the pu-
 nishment which God will inflict, since there are
 many

many to be found who are the subjects of such fears? Would not this be giving the lie to the God of truth, and asserting that our apprehensions may exceed his severity? But you may say *Lam. iii. 33.* the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. True: for did not his glory require it, this would not be the case. This Paul observes *1 Thess. i. ver. 6, 7, 8, 9.* "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Hence it clearly appears according to the preface of this chapter, that if God be not glorified in man's obedience, he will be glorified in the punishment of his disobedience. If his creature will dishonor his infinite majesty, holiness, and goodness, he shall know by woful experience, that his justice also is infinite and unbounded to vindicate the honor of those perfections: for the wise man declares *Prov. xvi. 4.* *The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Some still object that man before his fall must have glorified God in an infinite degree, if for his

first

first sin he deserved so great a punishment, as is here noticed. To this we answer; he certainly glorified God, as God, in those perfections which were revealed to him, even to the utmost extent of his natural powers; and though a very small vessel, yet was he full of righteousness, and did as completely set forth the praise of him that created him, according to the measure of his natural ability, as the tallest archangel then in glory: however as his nature was limited, he in reality, but imperfectly (though not sinfully) declared what God was; for being a creature and incapable of shewing forth in point of degree what God was, therefore merited nothing; nevertheless he was without sin, (as before observed) inasmuch as his moral rectitude kept pace with his natural ability; yet on his transgression, he absolutely and totally declared God to be what he was not; yea made truth itself like unto satan, the father of lies; and thence incurred the Lord's eternal displeasure: which remark is a sufficient reply to the above objection, for if a sinful creature deserves no more in a way of punishment, than a perfect creature doth in a way of reward, it would deserve nothing. From all which we may plainly see that such a favour as agrees with the Arian's mode of thinking, is not sufficient to redeem our souls from the misery in which they are involved; for how can any meer creature satisfy so enormous a debt?

But

But if the redeemer be God, who can affirm that he is not able, were it much larger than it is?—Sinner! Didst thou ever seriously reflect on these things? Alas! Thy thoughts have been far otherwise employed: All thy concern has been engaged about the things of this life, what thou shouldst eat, and drink, and wherewithal thou shouldst be clothed; nay perhaps more stupid still, as if the Lord had given thee being to act according to the dictates of thine own corrupt heart. If not, how is it that thou art so immersed in worldly pleasures and vanity? Thou risest in the morning without any thoughts of him who formed thee, maintains the life he gave, and who has bestowed all the blessings thou enjoyest; and when thou liest down art equally as unconcerned and thoughtless. Pause a while and consider what an awful disparity there is between the Lord's requirements, and thy conduct! Do the most eminent for grace tremble at the majesty and power of this awful judge, and are they even astonished at his purity, holiness, and justice? What then must thy case be! Are they concerned from day to day notwithstanding their constant prayers, watchfulness, and fightings with the corrupt inclinations of their hearts, the temptations of the devil, and the frowns and flatteries of the world, to enjoy a testimony of the forgiveness of their sins? And thou never once enquirest how thy sins might be forgiven. Thou wilt say, God

is merciful : but didst thou never read, nor hear of his justice also ? How wilt thou reconcile his infinite justice and mercy, if thou expectest forgiveness without enquiring what a sinner thou hast been ; and how the guilt of thy great and numerous offences may be pardoned, consistent with his glory ? Oh, be convinced then, that for thy first father's offence thou art condemned, that the nature thou derivedst from him is accursed, being altogether sinful ; and that thou hast done nothing but sin, ever since thou wert born ; yea, thy thoughts, thy desires, inclinations, and affections are entirely polluted ; and thy words and actions one continued series of transgressions ; (for each of which mental and external offences, thou deservest endless punishment.) If thou shouldst be so persuaded, surely Jesus will be precious to thee, when revealed in thy heart by his spirit. A little Savior (when so convinced) will not do, no, thou wilt then see, that thou art a great sinner : yea, thou wilt see all thy sins even so great, that not one can be removed, but by an Almighty Redeemer.

THE DISPLAY OF THE DIVINE PERFECTIONS,
IN THE REDEMPTION AND SALVATION OF
THE LORD'S ELECT PEOPLE (FROM THE
RUINS OF THE FALL) BY JESUS CHRIST,
CONSIDERED.

CHAP. VII.

THE MERCY OF GOD.

Titus iii. 5. According to his mercy he saved us.

THE display of God's love was as early as the creation of the angelic world, for in that consisted their unspeakable happiness and felicity; which they all retained, as long as they continued in the integrity, and uprightness, in which they were created. Though many fell through sin, from this estate of consummate bliss, into the most wretched circumstances; yet love was farther displayed, in securing an innumerable host of those blessed spirits from the like awful condition. The fall of angels unveiled the justice and severity of God; but his mercy as yet remained wrapt up and hidden: when man was seduced by satan, 'tis not certain angels were acquainted with this attribute, until the first promise made to our fallen parents: however, though this promise had never
been

been made, yet God would have remained to eternity the infinitely merciful God, because it is an essential attribute of his nature. Mercy differs from love, inasmuch as mercy is not love to the holy and righteous; but to the condemned and sinful: nay it knows no objects, but what are to the last degree wretched; and such only are so, who are wholly destitute of the favor and image of God as just and righteous. Were there but a little worthiness in any fallen creature, the salvation of such an one (if saved) could not be of pure mercy, and if not of pure mercy, how would mercy as infinite, be glorified? Though this divine perfection be to be considered, as independent of all purposes of mercy, yet it is the ground and foundation of them. Though the Lord hath determined to save some only of the fallen race of Adam; yet it is matter of no little encouragement to the self-convicted and self-condemned, that mercy is an excellency peculiar to him. Let not such therefore despair, though they may have the largest apprehensions of their desert, and the most striking conviction of their spiritual deadness and inability. What! though thou canst not come to Christ, yet consider still, God is a God of mercy. In him are boundless mercies. Art thou blind? He hath illuminating mercy, he can soon give thee to see, and persuade thee also what a suitable Savior Christ is for thee; what a sufficiency

enty in his atonement for thy pardon, and in his
 righteousness for thy justification. But thou say-
 est I don't know that I am an object of God's elect-
 ing mercy, therefore how can I hope? But dost
 thou know that thou art not? If thou dost then
 thou mayest well despair. If thou hast still an eye
 to Christ, though thou hast not strength to come,
 look to his mercy to draw thee; but perhaps thou
 objectest I have no warrant to come. God doth
 not invite me. Were I better, and could I more
 sincerely repent, were my sins less powerful; yea
 were I not so filled with iniquity as I am, I might
 then take some encouragement; but in my present
 condition, it is impossible the Lord should call
 me. If he invites not thee, whom thinkest thou
 he does invite? The most miserable and wretched
 are not excluded; nay, his mercy is so great he
 invites all to whom his gospel comes; but alas!
 all have not ears to hear the invitation; there-
 fore be assured, that whatever complaint prevents
 thy coming to Christ, he can remove; and I am
 sure (if thou feelest the need of mercy) nothing but
 legality and unbelief are impediments to it; yet
 however look unto mercy to remove even these.

CHAP. VIII.

THE REVELATION OF MERCY.

Gen. iii. 15. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

AS the revelation of divine mercy could not have been made, but in strict consistency with the honor of those perfections, which man by sin had affronted; therefore in the display of mercy, the Lord determined they should shine forth with a more glorious splendor. To contrive so great and eminent a design, infinite wisdom was engaged; and to effect it, almighty power was exerted. How sinful man could be restored to the favor, and image of God, consistent with the glory of God's holiness and justice, was far beyond the limit of creature understanding to determine. This great mystery began to be unfolded in the promulgation of this first promise to our fallen parents, contained in the threatening denounced against the serpent, hence it appeared that a mediator was appointed; who should in the fulness of time restore the injury done to the divine perfections by man's offence, and recover man from all the miseries, which by his sin he had involved himself in; so without doubt our first parents understood

derstood this gracious declaration, how it might be explained, we are not certain ; but be that as it may, it appears very plain that by the early use of sacrifices the mediator was to them pointed out, as a substitute in their room and stead to make satisfaction to divine justice for their sins and transgressions. This laid a sufficient foundation for their hope of pardon ; with which alone, it was not the divine purpose they should rest contented ; I therefore think they certainly beheld the mediator by faith bringing in that righteousness, and yielding that obedience, which should entitle them to grace here, and glory in a future state. If we proceed no further, we certainly must acknowledge this to be a rich discovery of mercy. viz. First, of the attribute of mercy. Secondly, of the purpose of mercy.

First. Of the attribute of mercy. By this gracious promise the whole intelligent creation clearly saw, that the Lord was a God of mercy ; and though the heavenly inhabitants might not then have so conspicuous a view of the dignity, glory, and sufficiency of the mediator promised, as afterwards they had ; yet they doubted not, (being of the Lord's providing) but that the perfections of the deity dishonored by man's fall and disobedience, would by him be fully glorified ; and man placed in a higher sphere of holiness and bliss, than that he lost through sin. These angelic beings

beings we must suppose, were filled with enlarged conceptions of the divine majesty, holiness, and purity, from the very first moment of their existence; but how much more so, when the justice of God was so awfully revealed against those who kept not their first estate, as to be consigned over to eternal misery; wherefore it must be matter of joyful astonishment, when they perceived, that man who sinned also was capable of being recovered; and yet the display of the divine excellencies in no wise tarnished; for when may it be said the Lord is glorified, if it be not when his perfections in consistency are displayed?

Secondly. This first promise is a discovery of the purposes of mercy. But when were they first in the divine mind? Let the prophet answer this question, *Jerem. xxxi. 3. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.* Hence it appears they were eternal. To suppose the contrary is to deny his being; for with God all things from eternity to eternity are at once present. 'Tis essential to him to be eternal and immutable; and consequently no change can possibly take place in the divine mind. A succession of purposes are not with him, because he is infinite in wisdom to know what is best, and infinite in power to effect it. But the purpose of mercy flowed from mercy, *Rom. ix. 15.* yet not necessarily.

necessarily. God was not constrained to shew mercy, neither profited by shewing it: for *Job* xxii. 2. *Can a man be profitable unto God?* is a question the Lord himself puts. Again, As the Lord did not purpose to shew mercy unto all; those in whom his special mercy is revealed, mercy will follow, and will never leave them, until it has set them upon the throne; and completely delivered them from law, sin, satan, and the world: nay even death itself. How ought we to stand astonished at these things! Oh, what a mercy was it, for the Lord to shew mercy! And what a distinguishing mercy, that men, and not angels should be the objects of it! It passed by them, far more exalted, in natural endowments, and thereby better capacitated to glorify God, and caught hold of our nature, so much inferior. Let therefore this wonderful, and divine condescension be more than it is, the matter of our reflection and study; and be an encouragement to seek for mercy, in the way the Lord hath revealed it.

CHAP. IX.

THE OBJECTS OF MERCY.

Heb. ii. 16. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

THE divine Word is the person here spoken of, and is said to take on him not the nature of angels, in order to redeem them from their sin and

and guilt, but the seed of Abraham, even a human nature of Abraham's seed. This condescension was for the purpose of man's redemption, who through Adam's sin was dead 1st. in law, 2d. in sin, and 3d. was under the dominion of satan.

To be dead in the above senses, and to be under the government of such a ruler as satan, is to be in the most abject circumstances; nay, the condition of such whose case is thus, is so deplorable, that instead of requiring considerable help to co-operate with their endeavors, that they may emerge out of this wickedness, they themselves have not the least strength to desire it, consistent with God's glory.—Now, mercy will be displayed in the behalf of such objects as these, and thereby shine forth more illustriously than if it were only assisting mercy; to suppose some worthiness, and some strength in the objects of divine mercy, is certainly to dishonor this attribute, be that worthiness and strength ever so small. This we ought well to digest, for very important consequences follow a mistake herein. Let us then enquire

First, What it is to be dead in law.

In the definition of such a state, we may say

First, It is a separation from God's favor.

Secondly, To be under his wrath.

Thirdly, To be bound over to punishment.

The law here referred to, is no less than the

law

law of God, therefore every offence against it, is committed against him, the great Lawgiver. — Hence when Adam transgressed, he with his whole posterity lost the divine favor, because he not only was obliged to perform an unfinning obedience as a creature ; but by covenant for himself and us, was under an additional obligation to fulfil the divine command. Nay, we are considered in him covenanting. Whence it will follow, that when he sinned, we all sinned also, and incurred with him the like misery. This the Apostle to the Romans clearly maintains, chap. v. 12, 18. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* Or as it is in the margin of our present translation “in whom all have sinned.” Here he shews the first thing asserted, viz. that we are all by Adam’s first offence become violators of God’s covenant, and unfaithful to our maker ; falling under the same awful penalty with himself. — For it is added, therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, plainly evincing, that God’s justice became our enemy ; since his law was violated, his Majesty, affronted, his holiness dishonored, and his goodness despised. Wherefore the creature was rejected, and cast out of favor, as being now worthless, and contemptible ; having defeated the very end of its existence. Being thus separated from the

divine

divine favor, it lost for ever, first all true happiness; secondly, the enjoyment of all good. That the happiness of man was extinct when he lost the divine favor, is plain; because nothing short of it is capable of satisfying his enlarged, and unbounded desires, though it be the tendency of corrupt nature to centre in the creature; yet the mind of man never finds any solid satisfaction therein, but is always thirsting after something, which he is not in the possession of; and the more of creature enjoyment he attains, the more insatiable his thirst and desire is. Admitting the worldly man perfectly contented, yet eventually his carnal pleasure will turn to his greater misery, and bring him into a tenfold more deplorable condition, than if he had never enjoyed those temporal blessings he hath abused. The good things of this life come with a curse to the man who lives and dies under the condemnation of God's most righteous law. The divine favor is alone that ingredient which can render any thing of time and sense truly beneficial, because it is then enjoyed as a pledge and token of that boundless love, which the Lord bears towards his people, consequently will be used to the glory and praise of the giver. Such was the case with Adam in his estate of innocency. We are not therefore to esteem a man happy, who forsaking God, seeks contentment in the creature; for though he be

drenched in sensual pleasure, yet it is but fallacious and delusory, and cannot be esteemed true pleasure and happiness. That man is not so feelingly miserable in this world as he will be in another under the pain of loss, may be attributed to his insensibility of the worth thereof; yet his blindness renders not his loss the less: hence his state is the same, though his feelings may be different. Were the eyes of men now fully opened to perceive what they have forfeited, they would be as wretched in this world as in the next, provided there were no hope of redemption. Secondly, man being separated from the divine favor lost the proper enjoyment of all good. "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works;" are the words of the wiseman, *Ecclesi. ix. 7.* Evidently implying, that without divine acceptance we do not properly enjoy even the necessities of life: how much less then the superfluities thereof! Besides, as all things work together for good to them who are the objects of God's favor; *Rom. viii. 28.* on the contrary they who are condemned by his law, are in all that they use and possess, nay in every circumstance that attends them, accursed; this appears from *Gal. iii. 10.* compared with *Deut. xxviii. 15.* hence without the chief good, we cannot properly enjoy any good; for we do not rejoice in it to God's glory, but dishonour.

nor. Let no one mistake the design of this observation. It is certainly our duty to make use of, and to be employed about the things of this present state, and not to neglect them; because we cannot (according to the drift of our present subject) rightly, and to God's glory enjoy them. What we here intend is to shew our utter misery as creatures condemned by law; that mercy may appear to be mercy indeed in our pardon and salvation, for it doth not shine forth so illustriously, as infinite mercy, when it is displayed on those who are not utterly miserable. But to proceed, the loss of the divine favor was attended with the loss of all moral good; for the rectitude in which Adam was first created, was not his nature, but concreated with it; therefore it was no more than a finess, by which he might be capable of answering the end of his existence. Had it been his nature, he then would have ceased to be, when he ceased to be holy. Had he been created immutably holy he would have possessed what is peculiar to deity, which implies a contradiction: and if we suppose that by the power of God he had been placed beyond the possibility of a change, his fidelity could not have been tried. It may be asked, in what way did he lose his moral rectitude when he first transgressed? Why should he from that time be incapable of any future obedience? How he lost this power, is a matter we are not curiously

ously to pry into; yet some have thought it was
 the unavoidable and necessary consequence of a
 being deprived of God's love, and falling under
 his anger and displeasure. Says Marshall in his
 Treatise on Sanctification, pag. 21. "I have
 "often considered by what manner of working
 "any sin could effectually destroy the whole image
 "of God in the first Adam; and I conclude, it
 "was by working first an evil guilty conscience in
 "him, whereby he judged that the just God was
 "against him, and cursed him for that one sin,—
 "And this was enough to work a shameful naked-
 "ness by disorderly lusts, a turning his love
 "wholly from God to the creature, and a desire
 "to be hidden from the presence of God, Gen. iii.
 "8, 10, which was a total destruction of the image
 "of God's holiness. And we have cause to judge,
 "that from the same cause proceedeth the conti-
 "nual malice, rancour, rage, and blasphemy of
 "the devil against God, and Godliness." But to
 say, why he should lose the divine image is easy,
 because the scripture authorizes us to affirm, that
 it was for the punishment of his perfidy and diso-
 bedience; this appears from *Matt. viii. 22*, *John*
v. 25, *Ephes. ii. 5*, *Luke i. 79*. but more particu-
 larly from *Rom. v. 19, 21*, which affirms that by one
 man's disobedience many were made sinners. Again.
 —That sin hath reigned unto death. Yea, our
 Lord saith, *John iii. 6*. That which is born of the
 flesh

flesh is flesh, and by many other passages of sacred writ this question is answered. How then doth the guilt of sin; yea even of one single act of sin strike and astonish us! If Adam's sin had not been an infinite evil, (as we have before proved it was) it would not have introduced such horrible disorder into the human mind, attended with such awful and tremendous consequences, as above-noticed. But

Secondly, We are under divine wrath and displeasure; that is, become exposed to the full demands of impartial justice for the dishonor cast by sin on those divine perfections, we were by nature bound to glorify: wherefore to be condemned by the law, is not to be deprived of all good only, but to be subject to all evil. Hence the evil of innumerable afflictions, in this world; and at last the dissolution of our present being.—Divine Justice is jealous for the honor of infinite holiness and goodness, and is not pleased that sin be attended with the loss of good only, but requires that perpetual suffering should be the unavoidable consequence thereof. What our true state is through Adam's guilt, is evident from *John* iii. 36. "And he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." If then, we be sentenced to future wrath, certainly we are even now under wrath though the fruits thereof here, are but shadows of what shall be

be hereafter. When the justice of God became our enemy, it pronounced its sentence on us, both for time and eternity. Though the sentence be not fully executed, the nature of it is not altered. Our sufferings here (if not in Christ) are part of the penalty, and a prelude to what shall be hereafter: wherefore all our afflictions, diseases, pains, accidents, and disappointments, whether in mind, body, or estate, point out to us this truth; that we are dead in law, and that God is angry with us every day. See *Psaln vii. 11.* But our utter wretchedness, as under his displeasure, appears in that the guilt of Adam's transgression only were we chargeable with no other offence binds us down under his eternal vengeance, as is proved more largely in our sixth chapter. Wherefore, Thirdly, That we are also bound over to eternal punishment, is a truth that divine scripture abounds in the proof of. *Rom. vi. 22, 23.* But now being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Which freedom from sin, is not only a deliverance from the power and dominion of indwelling sin, but from the guilt of every actual sin whatsoever, yea of all sin: then the Apostle adds, *For the wages of sin is death*; that is, not only the wages of a course of sin, but of every individual act of sin, that men may be guilty of: this the same inspired penman confirms from *Rom. i.*

32. *Who knowing* (says he) *the judgment of God* (that they which commit such things are worthy of death) *not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them*: especially if considered in conjunction with the following passages, viz. *Gen. iii. Deut. xxvii. 26. Hab. i. 13. Psalm v. 4, 5, 6. John iii. 36. Rom. v. 18. Ephes. iii. 3, 12.* How awful then was our fall in Adam! From what a state of bliss and happiness! And into what a gulph of woe and misery are we all plunged! Surely if it does not, yet it ought to beget in us the greatest concern! Are we creatures, and hath infinite justice a claim against us? How do we think to answer it? Can we endure what it requires? If we had offended a finite being only, we finite beings might yield satisfaction: but when we consider the injured party is the eternal Jehovah, this at once removes all hope, and fixes us in the most wretched state of despair and misery. Who can deliver us out of this awful condition? Can a meer perfect man do it? No. Can an angel? No. Can the brightest and noblest archangel? No, by no means: but cannot a super-angelical creature united to the nature of man effect this mighty work? Surely such a creature, though all the excellencies of the heavenly host were centred in him, yet he would be found insufficient to atone for one offence against the boundless majesty of the great God! What then O my soul must be

the glory of him, that hath not only paid down the full price of one offence, but of the every offence of the whole ransomed throng? The answer is plain: for no one less than the only begotten of the father could go through with so arduous an undertaking. Nay, none but Jehovah our righteousness, *Jer. xxiii. 6.* could have completed so great a work. But this is not all; for we are not only dead in law through our first head, but

Secondly, We are dead in sin. Very few will allow this humiliating truth. They will acknowledge man's nature by the fall is wounded and diseased, but not morally dead. Nay, some are so bold as to affirm, that we come into the world as a *charte-blanche*; and that we become sinners only by imitation: hence the doctrine of man's merit and free-will, of sincerity and repentance previous to faith and grace. But how will you reconcile these points, and the doctrines produced from them with the oracles of truth? Does not the Apostle Paul say *Ephes. ii. 10.* that he as well as the believing Ephesians, was God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus? And doth not he affirm *chap. iv. 24.* that the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness? This we readily allow say the enemies to Calvinism, but the word create doth not mean always a production of something out of nothing; neither by the new man is intended to express something which before did not

not exist. I answer, supposing the former to be true, how do you prove the latter? Does not the Apostle affirm *Rom. vii. 18.* that in his flesh, which in chap. vi. 6. he calls his old man, dwelt no good thing? For I know, says he, that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: now if in his flesh dwelt no good thing, and there was a time when he was in the flesh, or wholly flesh, as appears by *Rom. vii. 5.* then it is undeniably evident, that when the Apostle was in this state, which is the common and natural estate of every individual of mankind, he was asincapable of any spiritual act, as a man laid in his grave, is of any action of natural life. Therefore to be dead in sin, is

First, To be without any principle of spiritual good.

Secondly, To be wholly inclined to evil.

This being man's state by nature, he is infinitely more loathsome to the divine purity and holiness, even before actual sin committed, than the most noxious and offensive creature can be to us.

First then, we are destitute of a spiritual principle; that is, we are without the source or spring of the least motion in heart or mind, that God approves of. That man is not in practice as bad as he might be; or that one natural man is not so lost to decency, civility, and morality as another,

argues no goodness at all in the heart of any, because the first principle of goodness is wanting; even supreme love to God: but rather, the difference in natural men is produced by fear of God's judgment and fiery indignation, terror of conscience, false hopes of salvation, and even frequently by a principle of pride, willing to be esteemed a decent, moral, or religious man. The law knows of no goodness in any one that is under it, where love to God is not; nor will approve of any moral act, as perfectly good in its motive and end, that springs not from a perfect degree of this love. A wicked man may profit his neighbour by his liberality, he may in the eyes of the public be religious, honest, friendly; nay, surpass the real christian, in his outward and external conduct; but then he regards not God in all this, neither is properly concerned to advance his glory: all that he looks to, is either his character among men, or to recommend himself to the divine favor by his works done, without any reflection from what motive, or to what end they were performed. Such a character as this falls infinitely short of what is observed in our fourth chapter, touching the requirements of God's holy law: for it is the absolute want of a true motive and aim (which is the case with every unregenerate man) that proves him destitute of all spiritual good.

Secondly, To be dead in sin, is to be fully inclined

inclined to all evil. If the understanding be wholly destitute of true light, what must follow? Will it not esteem as eligible, what is most pernicious? The mind thinks not on God, but with horror, therefore is averse to him. The memory chuses not to retain those thoughts, which the mind is so tormented with. And the imagination if it cannot be pleased with God, and the things which relate to him, will entertain itself with every base and impure object: hence the violent and impetuous motion of the will to evil, and the wild and extravagant disorder of the affections; and so far is the conscience from doing its duty, that it is become so blind, stupid, and insensible, that it cares not for these things unless aroused by the law, and spirit of God: and even then, unless effectually stirred up, it will frighten and alarm the soul, but not properly direct and guide it; nay, will be so guilty of blunders and mistakes touching the true way of recovery out of this miserable condition, that it will inevitably prompt it on to such steps as will certainly end in the soul's final ruin. It is from these workings of conscience spring both the gross, and more refined instances of self-righteousness we have in the world: because conscience before truly renewed, will, if not wholly reject, yet certainly pervert the gospel to the soul's destruction, and stimulate the man to seek salvation by a legal righteousness; yet as it increases

increases in light from the spirit of God through the law, will drive the man from every supposition that God is satisfied. Whilst any one is under these operations, such may be constrained from a principle of self-love to do many things materially good, nevertheless his mind will be still wholly averse to God, and full of enmity towards him: this the scriptures witness. *Rom. viii. 7, 8. The carnal mind is enmity to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be:* so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God; for the more conscience is enlightened to know of God, the more the heart frets against him; which evidently shews that the natural temper and bias of the heart inclines unreservedly to evil, which never more strikingly appears, than when the man is divested of every false hope; or when the spirit of the Lord through the law, ceases to alarm the conscience. Having proved that the natural man doth nothing aright, and that all the internal motions of his powers are improperly inclined; we may fairly conclude him dead in sin, for the natural operations of the human faculties are morally good, or evil, according as they are directed; for man would not be man were he void of all action whatsoever. More might be observed on this head, but I pass on to shew

Thirdly, That man as fallen is under the dominion of Satan. This truth our Lord himself has confirmed.

confirmed. *Luke xi. 21. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.* Which observation is expressive of the completest rule; and the most perfect subjection. If a prince or sovereign can command the hearts of his subjects, he hath nothing to fear, his throne is established, fixed and permanent. Peace and delight, though under the wrath of God, and in a state of sin, is the most glaring proof of satan's power in the heart; and whilst a man remains in such ease and content, there is not the least distant prospect of salvation. Were not the spirit of the Lord by his law to hold men within bounds, satan would exercise the same power over their actions; and effectually prompt them to the most atrocious crimes: but herein though his power be great, yet it is limited; nevertheless, this limitation mankind by nature are not entitled to. The Lord thus restrains, that he might fulfil his purposes of mercy; and especially for the salvation of the elect. Whence come all the wars, murders, thefts and rapine, that are in the world? Though they come from the human heart yet think you satan hath no hand in all this? Certainly he hath. If not, how should he be stiled our enemy, *Matt. xiii. 28. 1 Pet. v. 8. The god of this world. 2 Cor. iv. 4. The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience? Ephes. ii. 2.* Hence it is plain, that this foul spirit is continually

nually brooding on the evil heart of man ; and many times hatches the most abominable iniquities. His power is evidenced

First, By deceit. Secondly, By violence.

First, His power is evidenced by deceit. This is obvious in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. *Acts* v. 3. Yea he is the deceiver of the nations. *Rev.* xx. 8. And by this method he generally prevails ; this we are not to wonder at, since hereby he at first ruined all mankind at once. But if deceit will not do, he will

Secondly, Use violence. *Peter* exhorting believers, says, *1 Pet.* v. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant ; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour.* Hence his darts of diffidence, *Gen.* iv. 13. *Matt.* iv. 3. yea his atheistic and blasphemous suggestions, against which sudden attacks of this potent enemy, see *Paul's* exhortation. *Ephes.* vi. 16. " Above all, (says he) taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." 'Tis through him, next to indwelling sin, that the world is so dangerous and hurtful.—How do the objects around us captivate and enslave our minds ? Do you think satan is not concerned in this ? Though man by nature be wholly sensual, and is contented to live here for ever ; yet the many horrid iniquities that the men and things of the world induce the human heart to perpetrate
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are through the subtle and powerful workings of satan, both on the tempters and tempted; so that he tempts one man, to tempt another, and at the same time, through his secret, but powerful operations on the pride, covetousness or impatience of the latter, he generally obtains a compliance. In this world we are subject to pain, afflictions, crosses, and disappointments as the proper desert of our first apostacy from God: there the enemy mightily improves. If Adam in a state of natural and moral rectitude stood not, what advantage think ye, must this insidious and powerful spirit have over us, who are not only dead in law and sin, but subject to natural weakness and imbecilities; and also liable to a multitude of external evils and distresses? I would now close this chapter with the following question. If man through the fall, be dead in law, and dead in sin, subject to the entire dominion of satan, and for every offence deserving everlasting punishment, what becomes then of the doctrines either of condignity or congruity? As he performs not what the law enjoins, the first he cannot pretend to: and as he is ungodly in all he doeth, being dead in sin, where is his meetness to receive grace? First principles can contribute nothing to their own existence. Not a single atom in the creation co-operated with God to give itself being; nor will our reason allow it; for no being can act before it is: and it

remains as inconsistent to suppose that the non-existence of life should contribute to life. Can a dead carcase quicken itself? If not, how can a soul dead in sin, by any thing it can do, render itself meet for justifying and sanctifying grace? Says Perkins, vol. 1, pag. 101. "That which is a deadly enemy to goodness, and is directly repugnant thereto, the same desireth not that which is good; but the will is an enemy and directly repugnant unto goodness. Rom. viii. 7. The wisdom of the flesh is hatred against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Man being thus circumstanced, how wonderfully is mercy glorified in his salvation! Were his condition less miserable, he would have somewhat whereof to glory, and might say he contributed something to his deliverance; which if he had not yielded, grace would not have been sufficient for that purpose.—Now as the power of God is displayed in the creation of something out of nothing; so doth the mercy of God reveal itself, in the acceptance and new creation of dead sinners. The design of this chapter was not to treat of the sovereignty of God, in shewing mercy on the elect, to the rejection of the rest; but rather to point out the utterly wretched and miserable circumstances of every individual of Adam's posterity; and consequently of the Lord's elect people in their unregenerate estate,

estate, as fit subjects for the display of infinite, undeserved, and unmerited mercy ; and the exceeding riches of God's power and goodness in their acceptance to divine favor, their regeneration and spiritual life ; to the end that the Father, Son, and Spirit may be properly honored in their faith and salvation ; and the creature left entirely without matter of boasting. That we may be convinced the Scriptures pursue this end, let us adduce a few passages thereof. In respect to acceptance and justification what is its language ? The Apostle Paul will soon satisfy us. *Rom. iii. 27, 28.* " Where is boasting then ? It is excluded. By what law ? Of works ? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." — Again. *Gal. iii. 22, 26.* " But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe ; for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." And as if this were not enough to manifest the Lord's intention, he adds in another place, *1 Cor. i. 27, 31.* " But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise ; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen ; yea and things which are not to bring to nought things which are, that

no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption : " to which is subjoined the reason, — " That according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." If these things be true, how ought we to be penetrated with a sense of our condition ! A vain supposition of our own goodness is the greatest enemy to the honor of mercy and to salvation through it. Pride is a great adversary to God's glory, and no small impediment to man's salvation ; especially that which is of a spiritual kind. Though conviction be not saving, yet all those whom mercy saves are first convinced. Therefore soul be assured, that whilst thou hast an high opinion of thy worth and ability, the word of truth thou wilt contemn. If Christ came to save sinners, surely thou wilt not apply to him to save thee, who art righteous in thine own eyes ! Thou mayest indeed apply to him after thine own fashion, but thou hast cause to fear he will reject thine application. If he saves he chuses to have all the honor. Christ doth not save in part, but freely, fully, and everlastingly. If thou bring (according to thine own esteem of thyself) a little merit, is mercy then free ? By no means. If a little ability, then wilt thou dishonor truth, which declares that thou art spiritually dead. 'Tis not a

new creation, but that thy old nature may be mended, is what thou seekest. Art thou better than Paul, who though an Apostle, yet declared he was carnal and sold under sin. *Rom. vii. 14.*— Oh! be concerned to know then the true state of thy condition, how condemned and helpless thou art; and then wait on mercy, where she is to be found, that she may exalt thee in due time.

CHAP. X.

THE MEDIUM OR CHANNEL OF MERCY.

Luke i. 78, 79. Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

IN this passage is obviously exhibited the origin, nature, wildom, and fruit of mercy. Were we to consider the antiquity of mercy, the covenant of redemption before all worlds, the exhibition of God's mercy in the types, sacrifices, and promises under the first dispensation; these would swell this little tract beyond the intended limits. Our purpose is not to enter so largely into this subject, but to shew how God is glorified in his divine perfections, through the display of his rich mercy. That this might be done, it appears

pears some medium or channel was necessary.—
 This divine medium scripture informs us to be no
 less a person, than that Divine Word which in the
 beginning was with God, and was God: even the
 only begotten of the Father, incarnate in our na-
 ture. *John i. 2, 3, 14.* To prove this personal
 existence before all worlds, his co-eternity and
 co-equality with the divine Father, the unity of
 his person in our nature, the distinct subsistence
 of the two natures in that one person shall not at-
 tempt, but consider as granted. However, if any
 one should doubt of these things, let him take
 heed lest he be convinced too late of their truth.
 Nevertheless I would add that it is necessary we
 should be persuaded, that from the unity of his
 two natures in one person, whatsoever appertained
 to or was done by the one nature, is reciprocally
 attributed to the other. Hence our Lord saith,
John iii. 13: “And no man hath ascended up to
 heaven, but he that came down from heaven,
 even the Son of man which is in heaven.” As the
 Son of God, he was then in heaven; but not as
 the Son of man: yet on account of the personal
 union, Christ as Son of man was then in heaven,
 even as he is now on earth. *Wherever two or three
 are gathered together in my name, there am I (says he)
 in the midst of them, Matt. xviii. 20.* Paul in his
 charge to the elders of Miletus, saith, *Acts xx. 28.*
Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock,

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over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood : implying, that what Christ's human nature did and suffered, is esteemed in point of merit and efficacy as done and suffered by the divine. Wherefore this glorious medium of mercy is the Lord Jesus Christ, who answered to the character given of the Messiah : this is manifest from *Matt. i. 20,--23.* " But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife ; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,—Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us." How should we stand amazed at this astonishing condescension ! If the Lord had visited a world of perfect creatures, how great the stoop ! But to dwell amongst those who had ran in debt to his justice ten thousand talents, and had nothing to pay ; yea such as were living in sin as their element ; and to reside in the midst of them in the likeness of sinful flesh. All language fails to express this condescension. Nay
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to aim at the full conception of it, would be presumption itself. What therefore becomes us, is to admire and adore, that eternity should become time, the creator and sovereign of the universe a creature, and the infinite Jehovah a babe in the manger; add to which, that this divine personage should dwell and converse with sinful mortals.—However when we reflect on the Lord's purpose in this divine transaction, that it was to give light to them that sat in darkness, and to guide our feet into the way of peace, how resplendent doth mercy shine forth in this divine gift! Surely it was tender mercy indeed, that rather than sinners should perish for ever, God's Son, even his only begotten Son is given for them! When we consider the unloveliness of the objects beloved, and the greatness of the gift, it seems as if it were the highest instance of God's compassion: for God so loved the world, saith our blessed Savior, that he gave his only begotten Son, *John iii. 16.* that is, without a comparison, greater than which could not be shewn. But it appears free and unmerited, inasmuch as fallen angels were rejected; and also many of the human race uninterested in it so as effectually to be brought into glory. Above all things therefore let us be concerned to know, and prize this blessing. Rest not contented O my soul without an interest therein! Meditate on the dignity and value of the Savior, and his suitable-

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ness to thy condition. Pray to know him effectually, according to the purposes for which he was revealed, and stop not short of a true and superlative affection for him.

CHAP. XI.

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE DIVINE MERCY IN THE SURETSHIP OF CHRIST.

Psalm lxxxix. 19. I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

AS the Lord is but one in nature, an infinite, immutable, pure, and simple being; that is not made up of parts and passions: therefore we are not to judge of his attributes and excellencies as we would of the properties of a creature; for all things are in God in the concrete and abstract. Hence it is said God is light, God is love, 1 John i. 5. iv. 16. consequently holiness, justice, mercy. "Nay, says *Turretine*, without doubt the attributes of God are innumerable; yet what is chiefly revealed to us, is that he is one eternal, chief, infinite, immutable, simple, wise, &c. Spirit." *Compend. Theol.* page 72.—Wherefore 'tis plain there can be no disorder in his perfections; neither is it possible there should be in the display of them; for the one would be inconsistent with his nature, and the other with his glory.

Seeing then that whatsoever is in God as an attribute, is God; to reveal his mercy in the salvation of sinners, to the expense of justice and holiness, would not be to declare himself what he is; neither would the mercy of God appear to be such. If then this divine attribute only shines forth in all its proper splendor and refulgency when glorified in strict harmony with all the revealed moral perfections of God, how exalted then is it in the suretiship of Christ! Nay how else could it be at all exalted? It is too curious a question which some put, whether the Lord could have saved fallen man without a surety; because it is not for us to determine what infinite wisdom and power could effect; yet we may ask such enquirers in our turn, whether the gift of God's Son was not the greatest gift God could bestow? And how it was it should be bestowed if not necessary? If no answer be given, let then all such queries as the former for ever subside, until we can point out some other method which would effectually have secured God's glory and man's salvation: which to attempt to do, would be to the last degree daring and presumptuous. That mercy is glorified through Christ's suretiship, I suppose none can doubt that read the scripture. What saith it? "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger

ger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. *Micah vii. 18.* 'Tis then added verse 20, "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." Compare this with *Luke i. 69.* to the close, and it will appear beyond contradiction. Upon Christ's engagement all the saints which died before his incarnation, were taken to heaven; for the Lord was pleased to trust the mediator for payment of what law and justice required, until the time appointed to make good his covenant engagement; God the Father accounting it as already done! This sufficiently evinces the sublimity, and co-equality of Christ's person. It being impossible that one so glorious should not fulfil, even to the utmost tittle what he had promised. Wherefore the church, from the earliest ages was considered, as in the hands of Christ their chosen Savior and deliverer: for it is said of Moses, *Heb. xi. 26.* *That he esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.* To imagine then that mercy was in no wise displayed until Christ's accomplishment of his undertaking, is weak and futile, for he who had covenanted with the eternal Father was no less than co-equal with him. How gloriously then is mercy exalted in the gift of such a surety! Indeed it is the highest instance of mercy. This made an inspired apostle cry out with rapture and astonishment,

ment, *2 Cor. ix. 15.* Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift! Content not therefore thyself O man, with crude and undigested thoughts of mercy, which hath proved a fatal error to thousands, but be solicitous to know in what channel it flows. God will not regard thy cries if thou regard not his Christ. Canst thou think he loves his own glory less than thy salvation? Though he be mercy in the abstract, yet to the wicked he is also a consuming fire. *Heb. xii. 29.* If thou art totally at a loss to reconcile these extremes, surely thy hopes of mercy are vain and delusive be thy sense of misery what it may. But if thou feelest that thou hast no worthiness, no meetness for acceptance, and seek mercy as mercy, for Christ's sake only, as the alone way to a reconciled God, then surely thou art blessed, yea and shalt be blessed.

CHAP. XII.

THE DISPLAY OF DIVINE WISDOM AND POWER IN THE GLORIFICATION OF MERCY, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

1 Cor. i. 24. Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

THE idea of a substitute or surety, necessarily implies a transfer or imputation: and amongst men it takes place upon a supposed inability

bility or incapacity of the person, for whom any
 one is a surety. Daily experience shows, that
 one person is prosecuted for the debt of another,
 in consequence of a prior covenant or agreement;
 and the surety, the principal becoming insolvent,
 is properly esteemed the debtor. The propriety
 hereof, in civil affairs, all men allow, but some
 there are, in divine matters, who count this foolish-
 ness: such are they, who deny the Lord Jesus
 Christ to be more than man, and explode the
 doctrine of his satisfaction in behalf of sinners.—
 They think if a man be not saved by his own suf-
 ferings and obedience, he cannot be saved at all;
 and therefore suppose, the only benefit derived
 from the Messiah is his perfect example, both in
 doing and suffering. Hence the doctrines, that
 God could justly pardon sin without any satisfaction.
 That Christ by his death did not satisfy for us,
 but only obtained power for us to satisfy for our-
 selves by our faith and obedience. That Christ
 died on his own account, having assumed the mor-
 tality and infirmities of our nature. That death
 eternal is nothing else but a perpetual continuance
 in death or annihilation. Doctrines most shock-
 ing; and as widely different from the tenor of sa-
 cred writ, as the poles are asunder. Maxims simi-
 lar to which, are frequently attendant on the de-
 nial of the propriety of divine suretyship and im-
 putation; neither will any one properly perceive
 this propriety who denies sin to be an infinite evil.

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Though the grand truths touching the person, offices and redemption of Christ be writ in the divine oracles as with a sun-beam, and need not a long train of arguments for their proof and elucidation; being obvious on inspection and in themselves evidential of the infinite malignity of man's guilt; yet seeing they have been most wickedly and foolishly perverted by the judicially blind and ignorant, we would not forego any proper argument for their vindication and defence; of which kind we may justly esteem the following truth; that if God created all things for his glory; then sin is an infinite evil; because committed against him. Here it is necessary to make a digression; that the term evil as applied to sin, may not be misunderstood; since the weight of this argument depends thereon; for if we make no distinction between sin and the evil of sin, we may then say the law or rule is limited, therefore the evil of sin is limited; and so consider both sin and its evil as subjective; but as there are innumerable passages of scripture, which declare every sin to be committed against God, the great lawgiver; we conclude then that the law shows the sin; and being committed against God, whose law is thereby violated, declares the evil thereof. The term sin is wont to be understood by the Greek word *ἁμαρτία*, signifying a deviation, or aberration from the law; and the evil thereof by the Latin word *culpa*; signifying guilt; but as the word guilt hath various meanings; through

by

by the evil of sin therefore we would all along be understood to intend, that the subject of the least sin or deviation from the law, is deserving or liable to be punished in proportion to the dignity of the law-giver; and that the increase of such guilt will be in proportion to the number and greatness of sins committed: as for example: If a rational creature fails to express, but in one act, a supreme and entire love to God, he is deserving of eternal punishment: but if he openly blaspheme God, or violate the law repeatedly, he merits not only an eternity of punishment, but such a degree of eternal punishment, as is proportionate to the number and atrociousness of his offences. Now if the glory of God required that Adam and his posterity should be punished for original and actual sin, according to the observation here made, can we suppose that any created being could have devised by what means man might be again reconciled to God, and yet the divine perfections in no wise dishonored? For the very nature of man's desert implies his insufficiency to make ample satisfaction to justice by suffering. Hence the wisdom and power of God are glorified in the revelation of mercy, his wisdom in devising a way, and his power in effecting it. First the wisdom of God is glorified in devising a way wherein mercy might be honored. They who are in no wise tender of the honor of the divine attributes, make no difficulty

culty to determine in this matter. One has this system, and another that; but whatever plans men adopt, if they differ from the Lord's way, you may be assured they will all be found upon proper scrutiny to dishonor, rather than glorify the divine perfections and excellencies. One denies the Savior entirely. Another tells us he is but a meer man. Whilst a third would persuade us, that he is a super-angelical creature united to a human body. By these schemes what is become of God's glory? And wherein doth the evil of sin appear? I don't know why each sinner might not by suffering have satisfied for his own sin, as well as a super-angelical creature have satisfied for the offences of all that shall be saved. The great evil or guilt of Adam's original transgression, says a certain author, is clearly evinced by its being punished with the loss of the divine image: nay, and I am apt to think it is a proof of its infinite evil; but men in general do not believe it, since they suppose every man to have a principle of good in him, and may thereby if not wanting to himself be saved; just as if the punishment of sin was not rejection from God, but only chastisement; and therefore if men labor to do what they can, they shall be saved: nay, salvation they shall obtain, if their good deeds do but outweigh their bad ones, and they endure also tribulation with patience. By these principles, neither the holiness,
justice,

justice, truth, nor mercy of God appear to be what they are; but rather finite and limited. But to return: the wisdom of God in redemption is displayed,

First, In the mediator's person.

Secondly, By the two distinct natures in that person.

First, In the mediator's person is displayed the infinite mercy, and wisdom of God. His wisdom that so fit, and his mercy, that so great and glorious a personage should be chosen for the purpose of man's redemption. Who can suppose, be man's guilt and misery ever so great, that this Redeemer of whom we treat, is not sufficient to bear it away; seeing he is no less than that Divine Word, which was with God, and was God. *John i. 1.*—If the eternal Jehovah become a surety, and he will atone for man's transgression, surely the atonement must be sufficient! For though we may apprehend in measure the nature of our guilt, yet his dignity is infinitely beyond all human thought. Whatever the justice and holiness of God require, he can yield, and whatever the misery and want of man may be, the one he can redress, and the other supply. Nay, there is no end to his dignity, power, and sufficiency, both for the honor of God, in all his revealed perfections, and the salvation of man from the depths of extreme misery.

sery. But that this might be effected Divine Wisdom was pleased,

Secondly, That this glorious person should assume man's nature ; for it was impossible that Deity should obey, much more suffer. This he did that the law which still abode in full force, might be amply satisfied in all its requirements ; for justice regarded not man's weakness to sustain the punishment due, nor holiness made any abatement on account of man's total incapacity of a moral kind to yield obedience. Whence it is evident, that to reject the doctrine of imputation, is to deny the truth, on which all our hopes of salvation depend, and to disclaim all and every kind of benefit that can result from this most illustrious instance of divine condescension and mercy ; nay, to cast the greatest dishonor on the wisdom of the Most High. Though it becomes not man to determine what the Lord might or could do, yet we may safely ask our fellow mortals these questions, viz. Whether the Lord hath not created all things for his glory ? Whether infinite majesty and holiness be not dishonored by sin and the fall ? If the sinner be finite, and his guilt infinite, what atonement can be made unless his sins be imputed unto another ? If not, how should mercy be displayed at all ? To think of God and his perfections, or the glorification of them, as we reflect on those graces or virtues in ourselves
which

which have some faint resemblance thereof, is not to conceive of God, but of an idol, a fiction of our own brain, and tends not to his glory, but dishonor. Besides, no perfection in Jehovah can be considered but in harmony with all the rest; neither can any one divine attribute be glorified if another be injured; for says Zanchy, vol. 2, page 50, "*Revera autem in Deo accidentia non sunt neque naturales passionēs, aliudve quippiam ab essentia illius diversum; eas tamen Deus, quo melius suam nobis naturam patefaceret, sibi attribuere in sacris literis consuevit.*" i. e. Certainly they are not accidents, nor natural passions in God, nor something distinct from his essence; nevertheless, the Lord in his holy oracles frequently attributes them to himself, that he might the better discover his nature to us.—Consequently to assert, that the holiness and justice of God may be dishonored in order that mercy may be displayed, is to deny even mercy as well as holiness and justice. But to return. Wherein doth the impropriety of a divine surety, or the imputation of our sins to him, consist? Surely no creature can profit God! This would argue mutability in the immutable Jehovah. The highest end a creature can answer, is faintly to point out some few of the divine excellencies. The inanimate creation declare his infinite wisdom and power. The perfect and intelligent creation shew forth his greatness, love,

and goodness. Sinners, in their punishment, his infinite justice and power. And if the Lord hath devised a way wherein all the divine perfections may harmoniously shine forth with redoubled lustre, in the salvation of the completely wretched, is not the end of their creation answered who are the subjects of such rich grace? Certainly the glory of God is more displayed by Christ, as a Redeemer and Savior, than ever hath already been or ever will be by the whole intelligent creation to eternity: therefore all the objections against this plan of infinite wisdom spring from the proud and presumptuous will of man, which would fain aim at independency, not willing to be a subject, but a self-sufficient agent; not an instrument, but an efficient, capable of itself to produce something worthy of divine acceptance. This inclination of mind argues great blindness touching man's desert and inability; and the profoundest ignorance of the divine prerogative of Jehovah, who not only is supreme to command and require obedience, but asserts himself to be the author and giver of every perfect gift, and assures us in his word, that without his mercy and grace we are under the absolute dominion of sin and death. *James i. 17. John v. 25. John iii. 6.* If this be our awful case, with what splendor then did divine wisdom shine forth in this glorious assumption of our nature! Man by sin had disho-

nored

nored God and ruined himself; wherefore by man's nature all things must be restored. *Psalms* lxi. 4. Was Adam a federal head, and did we sin in him? And are not the elect of God considered in Christ, both when he died and rose again? *Ephes.* iii. 5. If these things be true, God's people can by no means boast in themselves, yet through rich grace they may rejoice in Christ their great head and representative. *Phillip* iii. 3. *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,* is the voice of an inspired apostle; here let it be remarked, that the original word here translated rejoice, is the identical word expressed by boasting in *1 Cor.* i. 29. 31. Let us not boast then of the independence and self-sufficiency of the human will, because all such boasting is vain, but rather rejoice in him alone who hath magnified the law and made it honorable. *Isaiah* xlii. 21. For he is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, if we be interested in him, who is the God, or near kinsman of all his people, and whose right it was to redeem. Again. Divine wisdom was manifested in Christ being born of a virgin, and therefore could not be considered in Adam as a covenanting head, though descended from him. Hence he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and every way a fit and proper mediator between God and us. As his
human

human nature never subsisted of itself, but always in personal union with the divine word, he therefore was born, he died, rose again and ascended, not in a private but public character, even as the head and representative of his people; wherefore mystically these things might be attributed to them, as far as respects God's glory and their salvation; for we are not to suppose that the hypostatic union took place at the birth of Christ, or that it was dissolved at his death; rather, that he was God-man in one person, both in the womb and in the grave, and all that attended him was of a public and not of a private nature. On his own account personally considered, Christ could not be subject to any law, either touching precept or penalty, because he was above all law, being the Lord thereof; therefore he was not born, but made under the law for us. This Paul testifies, *Gal. iv. 45. But when (says he) the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* Surely mercy, by this great transaction, hath given occasion to wisdom to shine forth in her proper splendor and brightness! For the whole intelligent creation could not possess the shadow of an apprehension how the eternal, immutable, infinite, and holy God could possibly become subject to his own law, in the precept and

and penalty thereof. Here the greatest extremes meet. "Here is infinite glory, and the lowest humility; Infinite majesty, and the most striking meekness. The deepest reverence towards God, and equality with him. Infinite worthiness and the greatest patience." *Edwards on the Excellency of Christ.* Which demonstratively prove how suitable for his Office. To say more at present would be to anticipate the subject; for divine wisdom not only is exhibited in the person of the Mediator, but also in the whole work of redemption, and will with unremitted rays shine forth resplendent in its fruits and benefits to eternity. Since then the wisdom of God is herein glorified, so

Secondly, is his power. When Moses interceded for the children of Israel upon their murmuring against God by means of the bad report the spies had given of the promised land; he says, *Numb. xiv. 17—21.* "And now I beseech thee let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt, even

even until now. And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word. But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Here we see Moses hath a due regard to the justice and holiness of God, and would not plead with the Lord for mercy to the disparagement of these perfections. Nay, the answer he received was suitable to his petition; in which answer the Lord declared himself jealous for his majesty and holiness; for very few who then lived entered the land they had despised; so that their iniquity was severely punished, and the whole earth filled with God's glory, both in a way of justice and mercy. The great and puzzling question to every truly convinced soul is, how can this great and holy God have mercy upon me? But in answer thereto, hear what Moses says, Let the power of my Lord be great, as if he had said, O Lord God! thou who art omnipotent and canst do all things, let it now be seen how great thy power is in this respect, and how able thou art to forgive a people that by so many sins, and so exceedingly great, do still provoke thee. Let thy power to forgive appear, though thou be that God that wilt in no wise clear the guilty! If the wise man declares, *Prov. xvi. 32. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;* the Lord may well reply, *Isa. l. 2. Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redem?* Or have I not

power

power to deliver? As the Lord therefore magnified his power in overcoming his anger and wrath against sinning Israel, so hath he much more magnified his power in laying such a foundation, as is sufficient to sustain thee O troubled soul, from sinking in the ocean of divine wrath and vengeance for ever; the due desert of thy sins. This he hath effected in the person of his Son, through the assumption of our nature; and therein hath struck with astonishment the whole rational creation. The incarnation of the Divine Word, is the glorious effect of the omnipotency of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; terminating not on God considered essentially, but on the person of the Son; and so wonderful was this instance of divine power, that the peculiar properties essential to both natures remained distinct; nevertheless neither before nor after the birth of the human nature was it a person, but at the moment of its existence it was assumed by the Divine Word and united thereto, and therefore never subsisted but in union therewith. Here we see displayed, not only the attributes of divine wisdom and power, but we behold Christ himself in his complete person to be both the wisdom and power of God.— See 1 Cor. i. 24. Says Dr. Guyse on the place, “ This very doctrine of salvation through a crucified Jesus appears, and approves itself to be “ full of all divine wisdom and power, to them

" that are effectually called, whether they be
 " Jews or Gentiles: They see the infinite power
 " of God in carrying the Redeemer through his
 " terrible sufferings and death, when he made
 " his soul an offering for sin; and in raising him
 " again from the dead; and they behold adorable
 " wisdom in the constitution of the person of
 " Christ God Man, and in the contrivance of
 " God to secure and exalt the united and har-
 " monious glory of all his attributes; together
 " with the rights of his law and government, in full
 " consistency with the free pardon, justification,
 " and eternal salvation of lost sinners, through
 " the death of his only begotten Son in their na-
 " ture, and in their room and stead." Add to
 " which the exposition of the Dutch annotators.—
 " Hereby (say they) may be understood, either
 " the preaching of Christ, or Christ himself who
 " is called the power and wisdom of God; be-
 " cause he is the express image of the Father's
 " person, by whom he hath manifested his divine
 " power and wisdom above all things in the re-
 " demption of mankind." Thus in the incarna-
 " tion of our glorious surety hath the wisdom and
 " power of God opened a sure way for the exalta-
 " tion of mercy and goodness, in the salvation of
 " sinners; plunged into the most awful and tremen-
 " dous state of wretchedness and misery; and raised
 " them thereby, to the most elevated hopes of ho-
 " linefs

liness and happiness. Oh! that our hearts may now be penetrated with a due apprehension of the stupendous power, wisdom, and mercy of our God! Oh! that this glorious instance of his divine compassion may convince us, that fury is not in him! That he is infinitely more ready to receive us, through this way wherein he may be glorified, than we are to come unto him. Think not O thou mourning and law condemned sinner, thou who art crying out what shall I do to be saved, that the Lord is not a God of mercy, because thou art, as it were, overwhelmed with the feelings of his displeasure, and penetrated with convictions of his majesty, holiness, and justice! Perhaps thou art seeking mercy in a way it cannot be found. Thou art not looking to Jesus, and to God through him. Peradventure thou hast forgot the mediator. O tremble at thy error! Knowest thou what thou art doing in expecting favor from God without him? Canst thou imagine God will prefer thy happiness to his own glory? How would he be the God of love, if he should love thee above himself? How could his glory be manifested in thy pardon if Christ be rejected? Nay mercy itself will be thine enemy, if Christ be despised; and will rejoice in concert with justice in thy destruction.

C H A P. XIII.

TRUTH EXALTED IN THE DISPLAY OF MERCY,

BY A MEDIATOR.

*Deut. xxxii. 4. A God of truth and without iniquity,
just and right is he.*

IF the Lord be true, if truth be essential to his nature, how then should his threatnings against sin and sinners fail of execution? But the scripture saith, *Jer. x. 10.* "The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation." This solemn declaration is corroborated by *1 Thess. i. 9.* *1 John v. 20.* As then he is truth itself, he will certainly make good all that his lips have denounced and spoken; therefore the redeemed in glory exclaim with exultation, *Rev. xv. 3.* "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." This leads us to conclude, that there was an absolute necessity in the display of mercy, that the truth of God, on the Lord, as a God of truth with respect to his threatnings should be glorified. The denunciation against

Adam (in whom we were all considered both *seminally* and *representatively*) was *Gen. ii. 17.* — “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” This curse we all incurred by a breach of God’s command; in eating of the fruit forbidden; temporal and spiritual death were the immediate effects. The first, inasmuch as the body forthwith became mortal; and the second shewed itself immediately by the soul’s averfeness to God and holiness, and absolute tendency to sensual and earthly objects. Eternal death though included in the threatening, did not fully take place at once. Nevertheless divine justice considered the sinner as dead, in this point of view also, yet withheld its stroke for a time, that it might fall with more tremendous weight on the victims of its vengeance. The guilt of eternal death took place immediately on the first transgression; and through spiritual death man’s debt to justice began soon to be increased: for being subject to sin in all the actions of mind and body, he accumulated to himself wrath against the day of wrath. This truth our Lord confirms, *Matt. xii. 36. 37.* “But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Nay the very sins of the heart shall not go unpunished. *Jer. xvii. 9, 10.* “The heart is
deceitful

deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." Thus being held by justice as with adamant chains, we were reserved to the day of God's vengeance, which inevitably would have overtaken every individual of Adam's race, had not the Lord found a ransom: because truth had declared, *Ezek. xviii. 4. The soul that sinneth it shall die.* Now in the surety which infinite wisdom and power hath provided, mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. *Psal. lxxxv. 10.* Nay, truth in reference to God's requirements from man, both by precept and penalty hath more honor in the exaltation of mercy, and salvation of the sinner, than ever it could have had from him in a way of justice and punishment: For

First, Truth declares what man's desert is, as a sinner. This would never have been fully explained by the infliction of punishment on man the offender, because of his finite nature; for he would have always been verifying the Lord's declaration, but would never have verified it. But the divine surety the Lord Jesus Christ, the almighty Savior, he by one offering perfects for ever them that are sanctified. *Heb. x. 14.* Millions of ages of pain and torment the creature might

might be in, would not fully manifest what truth had declared, *Gen. ii. 17. In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* Because still a longer duration would be required to explain it, and so on to eternity. But Jesus said; *John xix. 30. It is finished, and bowed his head and gave up the ghost.*—Hath truth declared that sin is odious to God? Oh! How clearly doth it appear in the sufferings of Jesus! Surely in him it is set forth to the utmost, even to the fullest conviction both of angels and men. If nothing then but the atonement of Jesus be sufficient, how thinkest thou O man, that thy repentance polluted with sin will answer this end? Wilt thou atone for thy sins by committing new sins? But supposing the law of God could not charge with the least spot, thy sorrow for former offences; admitting thy cries and tears to be pure and unfulfilled, how could this sorrow diminish in the least the demerit of thy former crimes? Surely it could not! However, It is more desirable to see men under the workings of a legal repentance, than to see them hard, stupid and careless; but it must be noticed, that to place any hope therein is most fallacious and dangerous. It is a denial of the infinite evil of sin, and the all-sufficiency of Christ's atonement and death; and thereby the God of truth instead of being glorified, is dishonored. To be alarmed, and awakened out of an estate of carnal security, to be convinced of God's

threatning

threatning against sin and sinners, to see ourselves condemned for the sin of our nature, and for the first act of disobedience in our common head Adam, is a necessary and proper though a very painful state of mind; yet so how proper to say, look O thou burdened soul to a crucified Redeemer? Behold in him the truth of God's denunciation! See in him the demerit of thy offences! What? Would no other sacrifice do? No other atonement suffice? Surely then if for thyself, thou lookest to him by the faith of application and dependence; to him as the gift of the divine Father, and the only way to mercy, grace and glory, how will such a look open all the springs of a genuine and unfeigned love! How wilt thou then repent, with the repentance not to be repented of! Not for life, but from it! Not for pardon, but as the fruit thereof! Surely then thou wilt be to the praise of the God of truth, both in respect to law and gospel whilst thou lookest upon him whom thou hast pierced, and mournest for him, as one that mourneth for his only son. *Zechar. xii. 10.*

Secondly, As truth declaring man's desert as a sinner, is glorified in a way of mercy; so by man's most consummate happiness and felicity doth mercy display it. Man in a state of innocency, was not only void both of sin and sorrow, but was filled with holiness and happiness; not simply exempted from God's displeasure, but very near
unto,

unto, and a peculiar favorite of his maker. His enjoyment of his God was every way consistent with the state in which he was placed; and we have reason to think, that truth had given him to understand, that upon his faithfulness and obedience, he should be translated to a state more noble and exalted; this seems to be hinted at by many passages of sacred scripture as *Matt. xix. 17. Rom. x. 5. Levit. xviii. 5. Gal. iii. 12.* But it becomes us not to determine whether this would have been absolutely so, or man only confirmed in his paradisaical felicity; yet this we know, he owed all to God, and could have demanded nothing from him, unless the Lord had laid himself under obligation by promise. Hence we are obliged to confess that by life, and entering into life, truth, under the dispensation of grace, has more clearly explained what is thereby understood; because through Christ not an earthly, but an heavenly bliss is promised. Wherefore truth appears more exalted by this glorious transaction of mercy through a mediator, in her promise and reward, than she did in the establishment of the first covenant; for whatever her promise might then be, we are sure of her promise through the righteousness yielded by the mediator. But some will still object, how could mercy thus glorify truth; seeing the latter had declared death, even eternal death to be the portion of the disobedient? The answer

is ready. Truth had not declared that God would not have mercy, but only published the demands of justice. The Lord herein is not to be considered in a private, but in a public character; not as revealing his decree and purpose, with respect to the eternal state of mankind; but as shewing himself to be the sovereign and governor of this world; and that it was his good pleasure to glorify his name. Wherefore he preserved his prerogative to deal with offenders as he pleased; either in a way of justice alone, or of mercy in strict harmony with justice. This being the case, truth and mercy is in no wise violated, but beams forth with greater brightness. How truth is glorified in the application of gospel blessings, is not the present design; this may be observed in future. Is then truth so essential to the being and honor of Jehovah? Hath he said heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away? *Matt.* xxiv. 35. And are we told *Matt.* v. 18. that one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled? Beware then O man, how thou neglectest the concerns of thy soul? What! Art thou living as if there were no day of account? Oh reflect, God is a God of truth! But perhaps thou art one who is awakened to a deep sense of his extreme danger. If this be thy case, I would then ask thee, whither dost thou fly for refuge? Is thine own seeming worth and ability,

city, either in whole or in part, thine asylum and sanctuary? Oh take heed that you make not lies your refuge, and hide yourself under falsehood! *Isai. xxviii. 15.* If God be so jealous of his truth that rather than it should be violated he would shed even his own Son's blood, how then canst thou imagine he would save thee to the dishonor of it? Renounce therefore O man thine own worthiness and sufficiency and fly to Jesus, as the alone righteousness and strength of perishing sinners, that divine truth may be magnified. And oh! professor, see to it that thy loins be girt about with truth, *Ephes. vi. 14.* that thou hast a true sight and sense of thy lost state by nature, that thy faith is built on the warrant of truth, and on the sure foundation even the atonement and righteousness of Christ Jesus; that thou truly believest in him, not only as the Savior, but a Savior for thee. Nay, be solicitous to know and be assured that thy faith is productive of love, fear, and repentance: then not only thy state will be safe, but thy joys will increase and abound; and at last an entrance be abundantly administered unto thee, into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *2 Pet. i. 11.*

CHAP. XIV.

JUSTICE IN HARMONY WITH MERCY,

BY CHRIST JESUS.

Rom. iii. 25, &c. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God. To declare I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus.

THE demands of Divine Justice are the grand, and mighty obstacle to the hopes, and happiness of every individual of Adam's fallen race. When the sinner seriously considers the enormous debt he hath contracted, like King Belshazzar, his countenance changes, his thoughts are troubled, and his knees smite one against another.—*Dan. v. 6.* But if this be not the case with some, it is certainly for want of a true and proper conviction of their awful condition, and of the perilous circumstances in which they are. Justice, we must now look upon, as pleading the cause of holiness, and requiring of fallen man all that the law demands. which is

First, Satisfaction for sins against God, the lawgiver.

Secondly,

Secondly, A pure and holy nature;

Thirdly, A spotless and unflinching obedience.

With respect to the first of these requirements, some attribute to justice, which demands it, the name or character of punitive, intending that it is not pleased, but with the punishment of offenders answerable to their crimes. What this punishment is, hath been already handled. That justice takes notice not only of atrocious sins such as blasphemy, murder, and theft, but of offences comparatively small, is not to be questioned; yea of omissions as well as commissions, whether in heart, lip, or conduct, and especially of that fountain of iniquity, which the scripture calls the old man, the law in our members, and the body of sin and death; nay it forgets not that first sin committed in Adam, the spring-head of all the sins with which mankind stand charged: for proof of which let the following passage suffice, *1 John v. 17. All unrighteousness is sin.* Mercy early foreseeing how wretched and helpless man would be as a victim to justice and wrath, looked with the tenderest compassion and pity; and was resolved to interpose. Wherefore rejoicing to reveal her benignity and kindness, she delayed not even upon the first transgression, to make the gracious promise of a Savior, couched in the denunciation against the serpent. *Gen. iii. 15. "And I will*

put

put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." On which original promise, the passage of divine writ prefixed to this chapter is a comment. But as this portion is asserted by the truly pious in all ages, to contain the doctrines of imputed sin and righteousness ; so there have not been wanting men, who deny it, and who tell us that Christ made no atonement for sin, neither is his righteousness imputed to us. These maintain that it is unreasonable there should be a substitute in this case, or that one person should suffer for another ; but that every man if saved, is to be saved by his own personal obedience. To the matter of fact here denied we shall say nothing ; it being so plain and so often and ably maintained, that it were needless to add more. To affirm that it is irrational is the most consummate presumption and wickedness ; for it is no less an offence, than against mercy itself, and all the divine perfections ; far more heinous than can be committed against the law of God, considered unconnected with mercy. However to support the plausibility of their assertion, the most futile and wicked principles are introduced, that were ever hatched by the spirit of wickedness, viz. That eternal death mentioned in the scriptures is nothing more nor less than an estate of eternal annihilation ; that man
before

before his fall had no original righteousness; that there is no original sin in us, as it imports lust, or deformity of nature; and that we have such a freewill to goodness, that we may, if we bind our own minds to it fulfil the law in this life. To remove so corrupt a basis, let us attend to the words of our divine master, *Mark ix. 43, 44.* "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Now if the worm die not, the man is not annihilated, but exists for ever: for that which is non-existent can be conscious of nothing; and if the fire be not quenched it must burn to eternity. But in reply to the two succeeding particulars, we say, if we are now the subjects of original sin, it is plainly inferred that in our primitive estate we were the subjects of original righteousness. That we are all, at present, the subjects of the former, will be obvious if we refer to *John iii. 6, 7.* where Christ says, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.* If there were no original sin in us, or deformity of nature, how is it we must be born again? On the contrary, if original pollution overspreads all our powers, it will follow that instead of being the subjects of a freewill to goodness; all the freedom of will man hath, is

to

to evil; because the carnal mind is not simply an enemy to God; but enmity against him. *Rom. viii. 7.* If then we allow the propriety of what hath been advanced in this tract, touching God's glory and man's sin; we may safely infer that he was utterly incapable of contributing in the least degree to deliver himself out of his wretched condition. Nay; it doth not appear he could be rescued at all, if the objection of these adversaries be granted. But to shew the impropriety of their pretence, let us consider

First, That God properly is neither profited by the righteousness and happiness, nor injured by the sin and misery of creatures.

Secondly, That all the revenue the creature can yield is, an acknowledgment of the divine excellency; according to his primitive creature capacity. Sin therefore is a denial of that praise, and a representation of God to be what he is not,

Thirdly, When God's majesty is affronted, and his holiness despised, justice defends the divine honor and demands satisfaction from the offending party, and will not be satisfied without full payment. The two first, we have already considered in the entrance to this work. On the last consideration we may observe, that if the demands of divine justice be paid, it will approve of the payment though it be by a surety; and especially, if

if they who first became debtors to justice prove insolvent. Because if God be more abundantly glorified as a God of justice by, and such attributes displayed through, the intervention of a surety, as before lay concealed; surely it cannot but rejoice in the acceptance of him; for the glory of God is the rule of the divine conduct. If then the glory of God require satisfaction, and through a mediator it be more abundantly displayed, how then is it objected that Christ made no atonement for sin? That it is a violation of justice to transfer the punishment? And that God could not punish his innocent Son for our sins? For is justice only an appetite of vengeance, springing from an hatred that is inflexible; but with the destruction of the guilty? Though a person that is innocent cannot suffer as such justly, yet he may through a voluntary contract. This is esteemed by men, both as wise and just, as the case of hostages evinces.— Though punishment attend sin, yet not always the person of the sinner. Indeed no man hath the absolute power of his own life, being contrary to the law of God and man; yet herein Christ had full power. *John x. 18. I have power (says he) to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received from my Father.* Here he declares his power as God, and subjection as mediator. He knew that he was equal to the great undertaking, and that none but himself could

could deliver : therefore it is added, and I have power to take it again. Whence then in this matter doth justice appear violated ? Christ voluntarily engages, and fulfils his engagement. What is the result ? Is it not that the human nature is dignified with all power both in heaven and earth ; and an innumerable company of sinners made perfectly holy in an eternal state of felicity ; there to extol and exalt the divine perfections for ever, who would otherwise have been the awful subjects of divine wrath, and blaspheming their Creator to endless ages. But still it is objected, how can Christ if he be God make satisfaction ? Would it not be unto himself ? Let the answer be in the words of the noted Doctor Gill :—“ Indeed in
 “ case of private satisfaction for a private loss, it
 “ would be quite absurd for one to make satis-
 “ faction to himself ; but in case of public satis-
 “ faction for a public offence to a community,
 “ of which he is a part, he may be said, by mak-
 “ ing satisfaction to the whole body to make satis-
 “ faction to himself without any absurdity. A
 “ Member of Parliament having violated the
 “ rules and laws of the House, when he makes sa-
 “ tisfaction for the same to it, may be said to
 “ make satisfaction to himself being a mem-
 “ ber of it. It is possible for a lawgiver to make
 “ satisfaction to his own broken law, and so to
 “ himself as the lawgiver ; thus Zaleucus, a fa-
 “ mous legislator, made a law which punished
 “ adultery

adultery with the loss of both eyes; his own
 son first broke this law, and in order that the
 law might have full satisfaction, and yet mercy
 be shewn to his son, he ordered one of his son's
 eyes, and one of his own to be put out; and so
 he might be said to satisfy his own law, and to
 make satisfaction to himself the lawgiver. But
 in the case before us, the satisfaction made by
 Christ is made to the justice of God, subsisting
 in the divine nature, common to all the three
 persons; this perfection subsisting in the divine
 nature as possessed by the first person, is offend-
 ed with sin, resents it, requires satisfaction for
 it; and it is given it by the second person in
 human nature as God-man; the same divine
 perfection subsisting in the divine nature, as
 possessed by the second person, shews itself in
 like manner, loving righteousness, and hating
 iniquity; affronted by sin, and demanding sa-
 tisfaction for it, it is given to it by him as the
 God-man and mediator; who though a person
 offended can mediate for the offender, and
 make satisfaction for him. And the same may
 be observed concerning the justice of God, as a
 perfection of the divine nature possessed by the
 third person, the spirit of God; the satisfaction
 is made to the justice of God as subsisting in the
 divine nature common to the three persons;
 and is not made to one person only, singly, and

“ separately, and personally, but to God essentially considered in all his persons ; and to his justice as equally possessed by them ; and, that as the Lord, Judge, and Governor of the whole world, who ought to maintain, and must and does maintain the honor of his Majesty, and of his law.”—Body of Divin. 2 vol. page 773. As the principal objections against the imputation of man’s sin to Christ, and Christ’s righteousness to the sinner are removed ; let us take a view how justice is glorified in, and through this divine mediator ; and how wonderfully mercy is displayed in shewing pity on the miserable. Did the law then demand

First, A penal satisfaction for sins committed ? Hence we behold the Lord of life and glory yielding to the full, that satisfaction : from the manger to the cross afflicted, and both in body and soul enduring the chastisement of our peace. *Isai. liii. 5.* It is certain when we fell from God, we became subject to all manner of temporal evils, as pain, sickness, and all kinds of diseases from within ; troubles, distresses, losses, and disappointments, perils, and dangers, from without ; being part of that punishment due to our sin. Now Christ though he could not be subject to all the like evils being pure and holy, yet every sinless infirmity he bore as our substitute ; as hunger, thirst, weariness, and such like ; being tantamount to all the evils

evils before noticed, for he was persecuted by Herod, despised by the Pharisees and rulers, in perils frequently by the Jews, and destitute of habitation; for thus he saith *Matt. viii. 20. The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head.* Nay, at last betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, and forsaken by all his disciples; and because his people had forfeited their natural lives to justice, he was arraigned, condemned, and put to death, even to the ignominious death of the cross. That the curse might be removed from his people, he was made a curse for them, in order that every trouble, affliction, and distress might be sanctified to them; and their very death be made a blessing. Wherefore St. John the divine saith *Rev. xiv. 13.* "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." If these things are so, we are not to wonder at the tribulations of this life. If we be destitute of an interest in Christ, they are but the righteous punishment of justice, and the due desert of our iniquities; though in another world we may suffer to eternity. But if we be interested in him, notwithstanding they are no penal evils, and in reality tend to our benefit; yet in them as in a glass we may clearly discover how

to glorify in God to whom all glory is due

odious sin is in the Lord's sight. Again. Is the sanction of the law to every offender spiritual death, and eternal death? Though we must answer in the affirmative, yet God forbid that we should imagine that Christ should be either the subject of the former, or such circumstances should attend him in respect to the latter, as do attend the damned in torment; such as blasphemy, rage, impotent fierceness of mind. This could not be, because he had no real personal guilt, and because he possessed the most perfect assurance of his own sufficiency and ability to go through the great work which justice required. Nevertheless he endured by a temporary suffering, what was equivalent to that punishment, which the whole body of his elect people deserved. Dr. Gill well observes, vol. 2, pages 641, 642. " Now besides
 " this corporal death which Christ endured, there
 " was a death in his soul, though not of it, which
 " answered to a spiritual and an eternal death;
 " for as the transgression of the first Adam involved him and all his posterity in, and exposed
 " them to, not only a corporal death, but to
 " a moral or spiritual, and an eternal one; so the
 " second Adam as the surety of his people, in
 " order to make satisfaction for that transgression,
 " and all others of theirs, must undergo death in
 " every sense of the threatening. Gen. ii. 17. And
 " though a moral or spiritual death, as it lies in
 " a loss of the image of God, in a privation of
 " original

" original righteousness, in impotence to that
 " which is good, and in an inclination, bias, and
 " servitude of the mind to that which is evil, could
 " not fall upon the pure and holy soul of Christ;
 " which must have made him unfit for his media-
 " torial work: yet there was something similar
 " unto it, so as to be without sin and pollution;
 " as darkness of soul, disquietude, distress, want
 " of spiritual joy and comfort, amazement, agony,
 " his soul being sorrowful even unto death, pres-
 " sed with the weight of the sins of his people on
 " him, and a sense of divine wrath on account of
 " them. Eternal death consists in these two
 " things, punishment of loss, and punishment of
 " sense; the former lies in an eternal separation
 " from God, depart from ye me cursed; the latter
 " is an everlasting sense of the wrath of God, ex-
 " pressed by everlasting fire. Now Christ en-
 " dured what was answerable to these for a while.
 " He suffered the loss of his Father's gracious
 " presence when he said my God, my God, why
 " hast thou forsaken me? And he endured the
 " punishment of sense when God was wroth with
 " him, his anointed, when his wrath was poured
 " out like fire upon him, and his heart melted
 " like wax within him. *Psalms lxxxix. 38, and xxiii.*
 " *14. and xviii. 5.* Eternity is not of the essence
 " of punishment, and only takes place when the
 " person punished cannot bear the whole at once;
 " and

" and being finite as sinful man is, cannot make
 " satisfaction to the infinite majesty of God, in-
 " jured by sin, the demerit of which is infinite
 " punishment; and as that cannot be bore at
 " once by a finite creature, it is continued ad in-
 " finitum; but Christ being an infinite person,
 " was able to bear the whole at once; and the
 " infinity of his person abundantly compensates
 " for the eternity of punishment." Let it suffice
 then that Christ underwent all that punishment
 for nature or quality that was due to us; but for
 degree, let us be assured it was so much, as infi-
 nite justice thought meet to inflict on so great a
 personage. Though the soul of Christ suffered
 immediately by the hand of his divine Father,
 as before observed, *Matt. vii. 28. 2 Theff. i. 9.*
 and which was the very soul of his suffering, yet
 this was not all; for he must be also exposed to the
 malice and rage of the powers of darkness; un-
 der whose slavery and dominion we had all sold
 ourselves; and by whom we were held captive.—
 This is evinced by his temptations in the wilder-
 ness. To be tempted of Satan certainly was a
 great affliction, even to Christ himself; for as his
 human nature was perfectly pure and holy; and
 possessed with the deepest sense of the majesty,
 and holiness of God, every thing therefore tend-
 ing to the dishonor thereof Christ looked on with
 inconceivable abhorrence. Surely then it grieved
 his holy soul to be solicited by the arch fiend of
 hell,

hell, to the things which he presented unto him ; for we are told, *Heb. iv. 15. that he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*— But the sufferings he endured from this quarter when on the cross who can tell ? However this we know, that they must be very great, from Christ's own declaration to the chief priests and elders. *Luke xxii. 53. When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me ; but this is your hour and the power of darkness, not simply in stirring them up to such horrid iniquity ; but the united powers of hell being now at liberty surrounded him, and cast their fiery darts at him.* Thus we see the divine Father spared not his own Son ; that there might be no charge left against us guilty rebels : for says Paul, *Rom. viii. 1. There is now no (or not one) condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* How then doth mercy triumph over justice in this divine channel ! And how bright and resurgent doth the righteousness of Jehovah as the supreme Governor of the universe shine forth ! This theme will be the song of the redeemed to eternity : it is begun already but it will never have an end. *Rev. iv. 11. " Thou art worthy, O Lord, (say they) to receive glory, and honor, and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."* But it is added, chapter the v. 9, 10, 11, 12. " And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art
O " worthy

worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders, saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. Now if this be the song of the redeemed glory, how vain is it then, to dispute about the power of God, what he can or what he cannot do, touching man's salvation? If God had not consulted his glory, such a question might have been asked. But some may say, might not God have been glorified in some other way yet man redeemed? How impertinent is such a question? If there had been an easier way, infinite wisdom would have discovered it; for then the God of love would not have bruised his only begotten Son. And to say there is a more expensive way, what is this but to deny the deity of Christ? For it is said, *Ephes. i. 7, 8. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins; according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded in all wisdom and prudence.*

Secondly, The law demands of us a pure and holy nature. Though Christ by his atonement

and

and death hath satisfied for all our sins, both original and actual : yet justice cannot admit a defiled and impure creature to the enjoyment of an infinitely pure and holy God. 'Tis not enough to be guiltless, but it requires also that we be blameless ; that is without fault or defect. Though the guilt of original pollution be atoned for, yet infinite justice still beholds the fault or defilement. — Regeneration will not do, unless sin were wholly extirpated, Grace puts something in us, doth not take any thing out of us. The old man is the old man still, though debilitated in his operations. Therefore justice cannot look upon us in this life as holy, though in part truly sanctified. The church cries out *Isai. lxiv. 6. We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.* — Yet Christ saith to his spouse, *Cant. iv. 7. Thou art all fair my love there is no spot in thee.* And again, chap. vi. 10. *Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.* How can these things accord unless Christ's righteousness imputed to us, include the holiness of his nature ? If the law, yea if the justice of God expect to find in us, or in our surety, what we lost in Adam ; and who will say it doth not ? And if (*Rom. x. 4.*) Christ be the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, how are we presented holy, and unblameable, and unreprouceable in the sight of in-

finite purity, but in the holiness of Christ's human nature? For an imputed holiness is as necessary to our complete justification, as an holiness imparted is to our glorification. Now such a purity of nature as the law requires, will never be found inherent in us whilst in the body; for the old man even to the last will remain perfect in all his members; but when he dies will die at once and become utterly extinct. Therefore Christ is made unto us of God, holiness impartitively, and also imputatively, as the ground or basis of the former, this appears from 1 Cor. i. 30. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "Christ (says Dr. Gill on the "place) is the sanctification of his people, thro' "the constitution of God, the imputation of the "holiness of his nature, the merits of his blood, "and the efficacy of his grace; Christ is the sanctification of his people imputatively, as the holiness of his human nature is together with his "obedience and sufferings imputed to them for "their justification." Again. "Christ assumed "an holy human nature, the holiness of it was "not meerly a qualification for his office as a Savior, or what made his actions and sufferings in "that nature significant and useful, or is only exemplary to men; but is a branch of the saint's "justification before God. The law required an "holy

“ holy nature, theirs is not holy ; Christ has assumed one not for himself but for them, and so is the end of the law, in all respects.” See Perkins, vol. i. page 83.

Thirdly, The law requires a spotless and unfinishing obedience. This some call an active obedience in contradistinction to a penal satisfaction made for sins committed. This active obedience the law looks for, both in heart and life. *If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments. Matt. xix. 17.* is a proof of our assertion. But the wiseman saith *Eccles. vii. 20. There is not a just man upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not.* Nay the beloved apostle declares *1 John i. 8. If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:—* Now it follows that they who militate against Christ’s active obedience imputed to his people, deprive both themselves and others, as far as in them lies, of celestial happiness; because to be delivered from punishment only will not constitute a man righteous. Though this be a truth yet we must allow, that there were many things in Christ’s obedience which cannot be imputed to his people, viz. His miraculous acts necessary to prove his mission and deity, wrought in obedience to his divine Father ; his ministration of the gospel, for which through the Spirit he was qualified as man ; his execution of the whole mediatorial office ; and his

his obedience to the ceremonial law must be also excluded in respect to them, who were never under that law. Consequently, it is his perfect obedience to the whole of the moral law, as springing from a pure and holy human nature in personal union with the divine word is that which is imputed to them. Though Christ in suffering obeyed, and in obeying suffered, yet we must distinguish between his active obedience and his sufferings: by the latter we are freed from punishment, and by the former we are admitted to glory; being thereby made righteous through the righteousness of the Son of God, for it is positively said *Rom. v. 19.* that, *By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* Hence through the atonement, the holy nature, and the active obedience of the mediator, justice is fully glorified in the highest exaltation of the most vile and undeserving. Nay nothing short of this complete justification was sufficient to entitle to the least special favor from God, for they who are the subjects of regenerating grace here, enjoy it purely as the fruit of complete justification: that is, God looks upon them as complete in Christ, and being the objects of his love in Jesus, therefore in his own appointed time blesses them: for had not the people of God been virtually justified in their head, how is it possible they should become the subjects of justifying faith and possess the renovating grace of God?

Though

Though it was pure mercy that appointed so able and sufficient a mediator, yet only through him are the claims of justice satisfied, which were the great impediments to the operations of mercy; but being removed from the sinner, justice rejoices in harmony with mercy, in the felicity and blessedness of the miserable; and instead of an enemy is now become a friend. In this divine channel justice is completely glorified, which could not have been had not mercy interfered. Wherefore ponder O my soul this divine transaction! O consider it with growing attention and gratitude! Look into thyself and see how miserable and vile thou art, and what thou deservest! And then look from thyself to Jesus for mercy; through the complete-ness that there is in him; because it is only in him mercy is found, and there thou mayest discover the fulness and freeness of it.

we conclude the whole of this chapter to be applicable to the use and purpose for which they were designed; and that the Lord demanded no more of his intelligent creatures than what they were capable of yielding. True it is, that being liable to a change, many denied the very end for which they were created; and contrary to reason ceased to give that praise which was most justly due. Divine holiness being thus dishonored, the Father of God was concerned that to a more glorious position should not be degraded, and therefore he was obliged to the wrath and vengeance of God against the

C H A P. XV.

MERCY REVEALED IN CHRIST JESUS, TO THE
HONOR OF HOLINESS.

Isai. xxxv. 8. And an high way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness.

AS righteousness signifies what is equal, convenient, becoming, necessary and expedient; so holiness intends purity, cleanness, chastity, and a freedom from foulness and defilement. When therefore we consider the divine holiness, we apprehend at once God's infinite regard of himself, his excellencies and the honor of them. Hence we conclude that all things at first were created suitable to the use and purpose for which they were designed; and that the Lord demanded no more of his intelligent creatures than what they were capable of yielding. True it is, that being liable to a change, many denied the very end for which they were created; and contrary to reason ceased to give that praise which was most justly due. Divine holiness being thus dishonored, the justice of God was concerned, that so atrocious a defection should not go unpunished, and therefore awakened the wrath and vengeance of deity against the offenders

offenders; and moreover strictly required the gift of moral rectitude which they had squandered.— This through the fall is the awful situation of Adam and his whole posterity. How unlovely then must we be in the eye of immaculate and uncreated purity! How unlovely as guilty sinners who have contracted a debt we cannot pay! Yea as unrighteous, and who cannot yield obedience, how deformed! Being now become utterly impure, defiled and contaminated in our very nature; mortally infected in the understanding, memory, imagination, conscience, will, and affections. Nay absolutely dead to God and goodness. How is it possible that holiness should ever smile again upon us? And if it smile not how can we expect the least pledge of eternal happiness? It is contrary to reason to expect tokens of kindness from any enemy: how then can we suppose the Lord will bestow marks of approbation on objects that he beholds with infinite abhorrence? 'Tis a consciousness that he is our enemy, which renders us so averse to him as we are: and the more we are persuaded of what his justice demands in order that the honor of his holiness may be maintained, the more our enmity increases.— Hence appears the propriety of what hath been advanced in the preceding chapter. Conscience if properly illuminated, is never at peace until it hath some testimony that God is reconciled;

and that diuine holiness is well pleased. But how can holiness be so, if it beholds us not in some way or other, as complete as if we had never offended? This we are not in ourselves but our head. — Suppose we were discharged from guilt, are we not still disobedient? and, admitting we were imputatively obedient, are we not still unholy? When therefore we are beheld as holy, obedient, and guiltless, we may then and not before, be pronounced in truth, lovely in the sight of infinite purity. The spouse hath this testimony, *Cont. iv. 7. Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee.* — But this could not be in herself, in Christ her head she was so considered: for the apostle saith, *Ephes. i. 5, 6. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will: to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* Adding in another place, viz. *Col. ii. 10. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.* If God doth any thing for us of an especial nature, he doth every thing for us. — If he justify, he justifies fully, and at once; he doth not behold his people according to their apprehensions of him and his truth. No. For he looks upon none of the race of Adam whom he approves, with an imperfect approbation; on the contrary, he either fully approves, or utterly rejects. Therefore there is no medium betwixt God's
love

love and his hatred with respect to the persons of men : for they who are justified, are justified from all things. *Acts* xiii. 39. How gloriously then is mercy revealed through the medium of our incarnate God and Savior ! Well may it be called the way of holiness being such in itself, even the holiness of God. Adam in an estate of innocence possessed but a creature holiness. The holiness of angels is but of the same nature, but the holiness of Christ's human nature though not an uncreated one, yet it is the holiness of God, inasmuch as that nature was in personal union with the divine word. Now if Christ be the head of his elect people, and they his body ; then must they be in the sight of infinite and uncreated holiness, amiable and lovely in him their head. Nay, more so than they were in Adam in innocence. How then is the immaculate purity of God glorified through the complete satisfaction of Jesus ! Surely it rejoices in the triumphs of mercy through this glorious mediator ! What sayest thou O reader to these things ? Didst thou ever meditate on injured holiness ? Canst thou conclude it takes delight in thee ? Is thy nature lovely in its view ? Is thine understanding, will, and affections, nay, all the powers of thy soul, pleasing to a God of unspotted holiness ? Didst thou ever reflect on thy thoughts, words, and actions, under a realizing apprehension that the infinitely holy God beholds

them? And couldst thou then suppose he viewed
 them with approbation? If thou say thou art a
 sinner, but God is a merciful God, canst thou
 hope in him and yet be totally indifferent how the
 injury done his holiness may be repaired? If thou
 canst thou art certainly in the gall of bitterness,
 and bond of iniquity. But perhaps thou art one
 of a different stamp. Thou indeed concludest,
 that without a mediator there is no hope, yet
 supposest he died for the original guilt and pollu-
 tion of every individual of Adam's race; that if
 thou art sorry for thy sins and dost the best thou
 art able, Christ will make up the deficiency. But
 I would ask thee, if thy repentance need to be re-
 pented of, and all thy good deeds be evil, how then
 is holiness glorified by the utmost thou canst do,
 though in conjunction with the merits of Christ?
 Or how can mercy triumph, or Christ have died
 to any good purpose, if man through actual trans-
 gression be condemned at last? It is said, *Deut.*
xxxii. 4. He is the rock, his work is perfect. And
 of Christ it is spoken *Heb. x. 4. That by one offering*
he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, or
set apart. Yea, *Isai. liii. 11. That he shall see of the*
travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. Wherefore,
 holiness is not glorified unless it be fully so, in a
 proper and perfect manner. But if thou be one
 who seekest salvation through Jesus, if thou art
 concerned for the honor of holiness; solicitous

to

to behold in Christ, holiness every way glorified ;
 if thou art mourning for the injuries brought upon
 it by thy original and personal guilt and pollution,
 convinced that in thee it beholds nothing lovely,
 that it might accept thee ; but art so conscious of
 the purity of a gracious God as revealed in Christ,
 that thou abhorrest thyself in dust and ashes ; and
 criest out with holy Job *Job xl. 4. Behold I am*
vile ! Surely mercy in thee hath been gloriously
 revealed, through the divine channel the Lord
 Jesus Christ, to the honor of immaculate and in-
 finite purity !

people of him, who worship all things after the com-
 mand of his own will.

Job xxiii. 13. But he is in our hand, and who can
 turn him ?

THE will of God has by many been divided
 into his secret, and revealed will ; but with
 more propriety it may be distinguished by that of
 precept, and purpose. The first relates to the
 rule of man's conduct in reference both to law and
 gospel. But the latter, of which we now speak, re-
 lates to the events which shall take place either in hea-
 ven, earth, or hell. Of these events, what are
 good spring from God the source, but what are
 evil the beginning, and over rules for his praise. All
 things therefore without God are the objects of
 evil either in a way of influence or punish-
 ment.

C H A P. XVI.

THE WILL OR SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD
EXALTED, THROUGH THE REVELATION OF
MERCY BY JESUS CHRIST.

Ephes. i. 10, 11. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him : in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Job xxiii. 13. But he is in one mind, and who can turn him !

THE will of God has, by many, been divided into his secret, and revealed will ; but with more propriety it may be distinguished by that of precept, and purpose. The first relates to the rule of man's conduct in reference both to law and gospel. But the latter, of which we now speak, to all the events which shall take place either in heaven, earth, or hell. Of these events, what are good spring from God the source, but what are evil he permits, and over rules for his praise. All things therefore without God are the objects of his will, either in a way of influence or permission ;

sion ; yet they differ from the objects of his knowledge and power, seeing he knows all things knowable ; and can do all things possible ; but hath not willed all things that might be willed.— Wherefore God is said to be omniscient, but he is never said to be omni-volent. And in this the divine sovereignty appears ; there being in nature, providence, and grace, a certain limit or bound touching the objects. Now as the divine will can be impelled by no external cause whatsoever, as a moving principle ; therefore faith, holiness, and good works foreseen in the creature, cannot be the cause of his will in the election of any to eternal life ; yet his own glory is the final cause of what he wills, being the highest end that can result from creature existence. That there are no more worlds created than are now in being ; that they did not sooner begin to be than they did ; or that they were created in the time they were, must be attributed to the divine sovereignty. The like may be observed with regard to Divine Providence respecting the individuals of mankind, the time and place of their existence, and the different incidents which do attend them, especially when we consider that one man is exactly similar to another by nature and in a moral view ; because we are all fallen alike in Adam. Hence the dispensations of providence are not regulated according to the different degrees of worthiness or meetness

in men ; for God sees nothing in us to incline him to bestow any favor upon one more than another. Again. The will of God is sovereign touching sacred and spiritual concerns. Hence elect angels and men. The one kept, the other redeemed, but both chosen in Christ ; whilst an innumerable company of each, being not elected, are left to sin and perish. The truth of this appears from the sacred passage prefixed to this chapter, which Dr. Guyse thus beautifully paraphrases :

“ That in the last dispensation of God’s grace under the gospel state, which may be called the dispensation of the fulness of times, because it is a completion of the various seasons of his gracious dealings with the apostate sons of men ; and was introduced as soon as the time was fully come, which he had appointed for it, and had foretold in ancient prophecies, and in which all things were ripe for it by a general expectation of the Messiah, and by a most deplorable and universal degeneracy and corruption in doctrine and manners among both Jews and Gentiles ; which made it the most seasonable time of God’s appearing for their help and recovery, and for magnifying the glory of his grace therein ; at this fittest time, I say, he in his adorable wisdom, condescension and kindness, took the opportunity to bring in this concluding administration of the richest mercy, that

“ he

" he might set to rights all the disorder and en-
 " mity that sin had introduced, and (*ἀνακεφαλαιώσας*)
 " by gathering together the scattered parts of in-
 " telligent creatures, might recapitulate, reduce
 " and place them in order again under Christ, as
 " their head ; including both the holy angels as
 " also the glorified saints in heaven, and believ-
 " ing Jews and Gentiles of all nations and de-
 " grees of sinners upon earth, by re-uniting them
 " into one body for mutual affection and com-
 " munion, and for joint worship under Christ,
 " who is a head of confirmation and government
 " to angels ; a head of righteousness, of represen-
 " tation and redemption as well as of the most
 " peculiar influence and government to the church
 " that is gathered from among men ; and a head
 " of reconciliation to both the Jewish and Gen-
 " tile converts between themselves, and be-
 " tween God, angels, and them ; that they might
 " all be brought into a new state of peace and
 " friendship with God and one another, and
 " might be all set in their proper place, and all
 " summed up and comprehended in Christ, as
 " head over all things to the church. In whom
 " also, for the accomplishment of this great de-
 " sign, we of the Jewish nation who believe have
 " been admitted in our effectual calling to a
 " part and portion in, and have a right and title
 " to, and possession in Christ our head of the glo-

" rious inheritance of eternal life ; which is dif-
 " posed of by sovereign grace to us, as it were
 " by lot, and belongs to the adoption of sons, to
 " which we were predestinated, according to the
 " free and unchangeable purpose of God ; who
 " works with almighty energy, not at random,
 " nor from a necessity of nature to the utmost of
 " what he could do, but according to the contri-
 " vance and direction of his infinite wisdom, and
 " the free determination of his own good will and
 " pleasure, as to what he sees to be most fit and
 " proper for him to do." But some will yet say, why
 are a few predestinated to eternal life, and not all ?
 Wherefore must the Lord Jesus Christ be the
 head and representative of a part, whilst the bulk
 of mankind are left to perish in the ruins of the
 fall ? Or why this man chosen in preference to
 that ? We will answer, these enquiries do not be-
 come us : all that we can say is comprehended in
 the words of Paul ; nay in the words of God him-
 self. *Rom. ix. 15.* For he saith to Moses, *I will have*
mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have com-
passion on whom I will have compassion. That the di-
 vine choice resulted not from any circumstantial
 difference foreseen in fallen man, ere they became
 practical offenders is evident ; because they were
 all exactly in the like circumstances of guilt and de-
 filement : but to remove every vain surmise touch-
 ing the cause of God's election, the apostle tells

us in the same chapter, verses 11, 12, and 13.—
*That the children being not yet born, neither having done
 any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to
 election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth.
 It was said unto her (viz. Rebecca) the elder shall serve
 the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but
 Esau have I hated.* Hence it is plain, that neither
 any advantages by birth nor works foreseen could
 be the cause, the latter being excluded as well as
 the former. To this purpose the same apostle
 speaks, *Rom. xi. 5, 6, 7.*—“Even so then (says
 he) at this present time also, there is a remnant
 according to the election of grace. And if by
 grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise
 grace is no more grace. But if it be of works,
 then is it no more of grace, otherwise work is no
 more work. What then? Israel hath not ob-
 tained that which he seeketh for, but the election
 hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” By
 which the Lord makes obvious his sovereignty;
 and generally for the display thereof, acts quite
 in opposition to our carnal reason. This he doth
 that he may leave no footing for man’s wisdom in
 this matter, confining his electing grace to no na-
 tion whatsoever, no state, condition, nor circum-
 stance, that man can be in; whether wise or un-
 wise, esteemed in the world or disesteemed, rich
 or poor, valiant or timid, prophane or pharisaical;
 yet for the most part those which men esteem the

most unlikely, such it appears by their cordial reception of the gospel, and by a work of grace on their hearts, God hath chosen. Now although from these considerations the doctrine of the divine sovereignty is established; yet we are sure of this, that God wills nothing but what is most consistent with his own glory; and this he will effect, being the omniscient, infinitely wise, omnipotent and independent Jehovah! *Matt. xi. 25, 26.* For as holy Job saith, *he is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Hence appears the great importance of the duty of examination, serious reflection, a diligent use of all the means God hath afforded us; whereby we may know ourselves, and the way to his favor and mercy. If all be not chosen in Jesus, if there be few that will be saved, how solicitous should we be to prove ourselves of that few? But you say, the doctrine of man's death in sin, and of particular election cuts off all hope, for how can a dead man perform living actions, or what will our attempts avail if we be not elected? I answer though it be not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy: *Rom. ix. 16.* Yet is there no encouragement given in God's word to seek him? What! Are not men enjoined to consider their ways, to examine their hearts and thoughts, to compare themselves with the divine law? Are there no encouragements to look unto Jesus, to
come

come unto the friend of sinners? And though no man can see his misery without the divine Spirit shine upon his word, nor come unto Jesus unless he be drawn of the Father, yet cannot men use the means to those ends? Is it for want of natural power, or of a willingness of mind to do so? Certainly men may do what is materially good, though they cannot without divine grace do what is formally so. If they cannot act from love, should they not act from fear? If we be not in God's ways, there is little hope of his blessing. Men are not blessed for, but frequently in the use of the means, and although there be but a few elected, yet until you know you are excluded, your neglect of the means argues the greatest stupidity and wickedness.

O H A P. XVII.
THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AN EVIDENCE
OF THE DIVINE PERFECTIONS GLORIFIED.

1 Cor. xv. 17, 18. *And if Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.*

THOUGH Christ when he yielded up the ghost gave the finishing stroke to our redemption, yet by his resurrection only, was it apparent

parent he had completed it, and that it was accepted by the divine Father. If he had continued under the power of death he would have been no proper object of faith for salvation; inasmuch, as his undertaking would thereby have appeared unaccomplished; and consequently all who died in faith of Christ must have perished. But in that he was raised up again according to the scripture, it proved that he was indeed the Messiah, the sent of God, and a person of the dignity and excellency he declared himself to be. That the resurrection of the Son of God, might fully appear to be a proper foundation for our faith and confidence, the scripture shews that it was the work both of God essentially considered, and of each of the three divine persons in the Godhead. The former is proved by *Heb. xiii. 20.* *Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep;* compared with *Rom. xv. 33.* and *xvi. 20.* That it is ascribed to the divine Father may be seen in *Ephes. i. 17,—20.* That it is attributed to the Son himself appears from *John ii. 19,—21.* And lastly, that it was the work also of the divine Spirit, or third person is obvious from *Rom. viii. 11.* Nay the apostle *Rom. i. 4.* affirms, that by his resurrection he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness. Hence it is clear that divine wisdom is fully glorified, since its end and design

is

accomplished. Though it was impossible that the mediator infinite wisdom proposed should prove insufficient, yet by the resurrection of Christ the wisdom of God as such, shone forth resplendent, fully evincing that the Lord had abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence. *Ephes. i. 8.* That the power of God is thereby evidently glorified is as clear; for as the Lord Jesus Christ not only bare our sins, but bore them away, he thereby declared the power of God to save; of which his resurrection from the dead was a manifest proof. That justice was fully pacified could be known no otherwise than by the resurrection of the mediator; who by his glorious triumph over the grave, glorified truth in all the threatnings and demands which it had uttered. In this glorious event the apostle triumphs. *Rom. viii. 33, 34.* *Who shall lay any thing (says he) to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again.* And more than all this divine holiness appears to be glorified, seeing the Lord sheds abroad his love in the hearts of his people, as the fruit and effect of their faith in a crucified redeemer. *Rom. v. 1, — 5.* We might observe also, that the perfections of God were all glorified as they stood engaged touching the dispensation of grace. From the fall to the death of Christ all the promises fulfilled; the utility of the types evinced; and the prophecies

cies in regard to the person of the mediator, his work and office accomplished ; yea, by this glorious resurrection all the promises of grace and mercy appertaining to the gospel dispensation, were ratified and confirmed. As the burial of Christ proved the reality of his death, and that by it, he had made full satisfaction and was indeed made a curse for his people ; so also his burial evinced, that the curse was removed. *Deut. xxi. 23.* All pains and penalties due to the sins of his people being buried together with him. But in that he rose again he gave full proof of his deity, mission, the conquest of all our spiritual foes, and the harmony of the divine perfections, through the redemption he had wrought out ; nay, by triumphing over the grave itself, evidently declared that both death and the grave were sanctified to his people ; and that at last they should be delivered entirely from the power of both : for his resurrection was an open and perfect acquittance, given by God himself to him, as the head and representative of all his elect people ; and was the most convincing evidence that he had indeed spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them by his death. *Col. i. 15.* Now was fulfilled that prophecy of the psalmist *Psal. lxxxix. 12.* *I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever, with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations ; for I have said mercy shall be built up for ever ;*
thy

thy faithfulness shall thou establish in the very heavens.—
 Because mercy having exalted the intervening
 perfections of deity through the complete satis-
 faction of Jesus, and received a divine acknow-
 ledgement thereof in his resurrection, it glori-
 ously triumphs, accounting all other enemies as
 chaff and vanity : since Christ hath died, yea and
 is risen again mercy looks down with infinite con-
 tempt on all the hindrances and impediments which
 still remain ; they are counted as nothing, yea as
 the small dust of the balance ; for though sin be
 mighty, and satan mighty, yea the world mighty,
 yet where mercy deigns to smile, these enemies are
 esteemed as already conquered, possessing only an
 illegal and usurped authority. Wherefore the
 language of the Lord by the prophet is,
Isai. xli. 15, 16. Behold I will make thee
a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth : thou
shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt
make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the
wind shall carry them away ; and the whirlwind shall
scatter them, and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt
glory in the Holy One of Israel. If these things be
 so, what sayest thou O man ! Hast thou ever been
 made to see indeed thy want of mercy ? Has jus-
 tice shewn thee thy mighty debt ? Dost thou see
 that for every sin thou hast committed, thy desert
 is everlasting punishment ? Art thou convinced
 thou art a sinner in Adam ? That thou wert con-
 ceived in sin, that by nature thy very will is dead

R

to

to God ? And though not perfectly persuaded of these things (for no man is so convinced of, or sees his sin as the law and justice of God beholds it) yet dost thou see that thou hast run in debt to justice ten thousand talents, and hast nothing to pay ? And so far from being able to recompence God by thy repentance, art thou convinced that thy best repentance needs to be repented of ? If so, be then solicitous to enquire for mercy, seek it in Jesus, through the atonement of Jesus, the obedience of Jesus; yea, through the complete righteousness of the Son of God. Seek it by virtue of the free promise and call of the gospel in him. Say not my conviction and repentance warrants me to believe, and entitles me to mercy. Consider ; this would be a great injury to mercy : because God's mercy is free mercy and full mercy ; yea it would be dishonoring to Christ, just as if he had not done enough to open to thee the door of mercy, but thou must make an addition thereto by that which is in itself sufficient to condemn thee. Mercy knows not the worthy and self-sufficient : it delights only in the miserable and wretched, and to them only is it revealed.— Therefore the more thou art convinced of thy desert of endless punishment and of thy utter impotency, the more likely thou art not to endeavor to purchase, but truly to discover and obtain mercy indeed by a mediator,

CHAP.

C H A P. XVIII.

THE ASCENSION AND SESSION OF CHRIST.

A FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE DIVINE

ATTRIBUTES GLORIFIED.

Heb. x. 12. But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins ever sat down at the right hand of God.

Heb. ix. 24. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

CH RIST having gloriously effected the great work of our redemption which he had undertaken, and evidenced by his resurrection from the dead, that he had so done, it was but proper he should ascend into heaven, and be there received; for if he had been excluded the divine presence there had been the utmost reason to think, that neither justice nor holiness were well pleased; no nor any of the perfections glorified. His admission therefore to the right hand of his divine Father was an undeniable proof to the contrary. This our Saviour introduces as the argument by which the divine Spirit would vanquish the guilty fears of men, viz. *He shall convince the*

world of righteousness because I go to my Father. John xvi. 10. Plainly declaring that every impediment to a union and communion with the majesty of heaven was now removed out of the way of those, who were brought truly to trust in the mediation of Christ. For in the names of all such he ascended, and as their forerunner took possession of the heavenly inheritance. As therefore his ascension was necessary, so was his session at God's right hand; being expressive of his dominion and government as mediator, and that he might make intercession for us; begin and carry on a work of grace on our hearts, rule for, in, and over us, until he should fully accomplish the end and design of his obedience and death. That he was an intercessor previous to these wonderful events cannot be well doubted; otherwise none could have entered heaven prior to our Lord's glorious exaltation: but then he was so on the footing of his covenant engagement only, entered into before all worlds, and by virtue whereof old testament saints were taken to glory. Now when that engagement was performed, it was then meet he should carry on that great work in his complete person. Hence we see that divine channel or medium, whereby mercy is exalted or glorified; and through which it displays itself in its operations, to the glory and exaltation of every moral and revealed attribute of Jehovah. It was not intended to enter largely
into

into every particular here treated, either in respect to our Lord's humiliation, or exaltation : as how the various types of the old testament answered to their glorious anti-type, or how the dignity and excellence of Christ are manifested by his glorious ascension, and wonderful session at the right hand of his divine Father. These are left to the investigation and meditation of the pious reader. If these things be so, let not the tempted believer be discouraged ; Christ hath not only finished the grand work of his redemption, but the divine Father has given the most irrefragable and demonstrative proofs of it. Canst thou then imagine O soul ! that Christ will be backward to grant thee the blessings of redemption ? Thou art kept back perhaps from asking, as thou shouldest, by the feelings of thy heart corruptions, and a deep conviction of the number and guilt of thy manifold transgressions. But is it not Christ's office to pardon guilt, and renew the mind ? If thou couldest have obtained these things in any other way, he had never been revealed. Wherefore lay before him the whole state of thy soul ; tell him of all thy wretchedness and misery ; thy wants and necessities ; and what enemies they are which oppose thee ; and be assured, that instead of rejecting thee with contempt, he will make it manifest sooner or later, that he hath both an ear to hear, and an arm to deliver.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

MERCY GLORIFIED, AND SAVINGLY
REVEALED THROUGH THE GOSPEL CALL.

Titus ii. 11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men,

WHEN we meditate and reflect on the mercy of God, as efficaciously revealed in the hearts of men, we are constrained to say that it well deserves the epithets free, full, and everlasting.—Free, because not revealed to all, and those to whom it is made known, utterly as undeserving as others. Full and everlasting, because it appertains to him who is eternal and unchangeable. As the divine sovereignty is manifested in the bestowment of this grace, being conferred only upon a few ; so also the Lord with shew himself a sovereign God even in the external administration of the gospel, which is the only instrument whereby the spirit of God regenerates his people. All nations at all times are not so much as acquainted with the letter thereof, consequently millions die totally ignorant of the mediator. Whilst this is the awful case of many, others there are who have it in their hands and are at liberty to read and search it, but are destitute of a public ministry ;
and

and though providence may so appoint, that other classes of mankind shall have public preaching among them, the truth shall be so obscured with error and superstition that it shall prove rather a disadvantage than a benefit unto them; wherefore it will appear that very few enjoy the privilege of a clear and faithful explication of the gospel.— This distinction in point of privilege consists not in any divine mandate or prohibition, but in the various dispensations of Providence; because it is not only a lawful but a commendable employ to propagate the knowledge thereof amongst all nations and ranks of men without distinction; and yet where it is propagated, men are not converted unless the spirit of the Lord will render it effectual. Though from hence it appears that the Lord's elect people ere called by grace, are exclusive of others the objects of mercy's peculiar regard, who being the only persons for whom Christ paid down the price of redemption, and to whom alone the gospel shall be made effectual to salvation in God's appointed time; yet all who are brought to the external knowledge of the truth, or sit under the sound of the gospel, are equally called upon by mercy to embrace it, as it is revealed through the mediation of Christ; there being in this respect no difference between elect and non-elect: for mercy beholds both condemned and dead in a spiritual sense, utterly void of all merit

merit and ability, and therefore fit objects for mercy to call upon. All are spiritually dead, and all are under the sentence of everlasting punishment, though some may have run more deep in debt to divine justice than others by means of practical offences. Mercy, to point out its own nature, and to shew that in the outward call it looks for no excellency in one above another, does for the most part when it speaks to the heart, speak to the deepest sunk in practical iniquities. However in order to evince that by the gospel call mercy is glorified, it will be necessary to investigate the proper meaning of the word mercy. Among the Latins it was expressed by the Latin word *miseri-cordia*, which imports a cordial grief or concern arising from the wretchedness of another; it is expressed also by *commiseratio*, answering to the Greek word *κατακτερις*, which signifies sympathy, or pity, or being grieved at heart by another's grief or misery: the Hebrew word correspondent thereto is *רחם*; if considered as a verb, it intends to love entirely, intimately, tenderly, affectionately, and from the very bowels. In Pihel, it signifies to pity; as a noun, it is expressed by bowels and mercies: for mercy ariseth from the moving of the bowels at the sight of misery; answerable to the Greek words *σπλαγχανα* *δακρυς*. *Luke i. 78*. Again. The Greek word *ελεος*, in respect to God, denotes pity of every kind, and also endless benignity.—

It

It is used by the seventy in translating the Hebrew word *רחם*; interpreted by *Leigh* in his *Critica Sacra*, a sacred affection of mercy, pity, grace, benignity, and bountiful good will towards any without respect of merit. It is, says he, that benignity or benificence, which one is obliged unto by no legal necessity: this is plainly unmerited, and not due, and altogether free favor. The seventy have likewise used it to express the Hebrew word *רחם*. *Psalms* vi. 2. The root of which the same author translates *miseratus, gratificatus, gratia profectus fuit, &c.* and says it imports to do a thing gratis. *Chrysostom* treating on the mercy of God, thus expresses himself, "Though there be in God *miserationes multas*, yet there is but one mercy; which is his essence, from whence issue *motus misericordiae*." See *Leigh's Critica*. If then mercy properly signifies what is now observed, and if mercy be one of the divine attributes, infinite in God; yea his very essence, how should it be glorified but as such? To limit it is certainly not to glorify it; and this we certainly do when we suppose that any of Adam's race are too sinful and vile, or not sufficiently qualified for it. Some in order to obviate this charge have thought on a new device. They say men through mercy must be qualified for mercy: they must be rendered, if not worthy, yet meet and fit for the divine favor; and this is done by divine grace through saving conviction and re-

pentance, the effects of the law only in the hand of the spirit. But ask the assertors of this doctrine, can men be saved without faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? They answer no: they are so far from that, (say they) that they are notwithstanding their legal conviction and repentance, still in a condemned estate, and under the wrath of God, and dying in that state shall certainly perish everlastingly. What a flat contradiction is here!—Men are the subjects of the peculiar mercy of God before they are the subjects of his peculiar mercy. Men are saved by the law; and yet no man by the law can be saved. They alledge, such are in a state of salvation before faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet they will own (*Acts* iv. 12.) There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved: and how can that be but through faith in him? How to reconcile these things I am utterly at a loss. What is the mercy of God but favor to the miserable? And what is the highest instance of his favor, but to translate us from an estate of utmost misery, into an estate of absolute security? Is it not a contradiction to affirm that we may be in such a state and yet the Lord unreconciled? Certainly such doctrine is a flat denial of Christ the divine medium of saving grace, and makes him truckle to the law; by granting to sinners salvation, which they through the law have already obtained. Nay such a position

maintains that we enjoy the noblest instance of mercy (for thus I call regeneration, or being born again) from God, under the character of a God of infinite wrath and vengeance. Here a remark or two is necessary. Though Christ be God's unspeakable gift, yet if a man be not saved through it, how will it be of eternal profit to him? Therefore whatsoever be the medium, beside Christ, of regeneration, be it the law, or what you please, that medium will be the Savior; and regeneration as it is salvation begun, the chief blessing a man can here possess, considered as a work wrought within him. But certainly as God first loved his people, then chose them in Christ; so without doubt, they are first actually instated into his favor by justifying grace; by the spirit through faith in Jesus Christ, ere they can repent with that repentance which is unto life; and consequently before they are so convinced of sin as truly to hate it for God's sake; that is, from a love of his purity, authority, and glory: for wherein does the essence of misery consist? Does it not consist in his displeasure, and to be under the frowns of his justice? What felicity can the whole creation afford, if God be an enemy? Yea, what spiritual life can there be in any heart, if God be our adversary, if we be really in bondage to his justice? And is not this our awful case before faith? I speak not now in reference to God's

everlasting purpose of mercy towards his elect ; neither in respect to their virtual justification in Christ before ; nor touching the evidence of faith ; their feelings and frames after grace received ; but in relation to the Lord, as the supreme sovereign and governor of the intelligent creation, the holy and just judge, who will render to every man according to his deeds ; and to our actual state and circumstances in his sight, considered in these characters. I would therefore again say, is it not declared that in his favor is life ? How then can we enjoy spiritual life without it ? If not, what then becomes of saving conviction and repentance through the law, ere God be reconciled ? As then the mercy of God is glorified by the effectual calling of sinners from a state both of condemnation, and spiritual death ; consequently the outward or gospel call, the instrument of this blessing, must in its nature, whether made effectual or not, exalt this attribute. This appears

First, In its universality.

Secondly, In its freedom.

If it were not universal the persons entitled to so great a privilege need to be pointed out by certain characteristics peculiar to them ; distinguishing them as more deserving thereof than others.—

But

But if this were the case how would mercy appear to be mercy? It would rather wear the character of justice. Among men the more miserable the object, the more our compassion is excited. And who do you think are completely miserable in God's sight if they be not those who are destitute both of his favor and image? If distinction of desert be disallowed, shall we say they are pointed out by being greater practical offenders than others? To affirm this would sound very harsh, as it would be an encouragement to sin, that grace might abound. Therefore we conclude that to whomsoever the revelation of redemption is in an external manner made known, to such it has a voice. Nay mercy requires every such person to believe in the Son of God, whether their offences have been more or less in number, greater or less aggravated; seeing the best are under the sentence of everlasting punishment, and totally dead in sin. But as it is the nature of sin to harden and stupify the mind, and mankind universally before the law of God is revealed in their consciences by his spirit, think themselves quite well, see no need of mercy through Christ as the scripture shews it, or are extremely liable to mistake the voice and nature of the evangelical call to them. Legal conviction is therefore previously necessary not to render deserving of or qualify for mercy; but to shew the sinner his awful state,

and

and how much he stands in need thereof. Now it appears that legal conviction does not entitle to the call of mercy, but her call may be, and is to many, who neither know their misery nor see their danger. If not many such who attend the gospel could not be chargeable with the sin of rejecting Christ, neither savingly to believe would be their duty. The spirit of the Lord through the law begets legal conviction in the conscience; hence our legal faith. False views of mercy mixed herewith beget a legal repentance, and a legal repentance produces a legal obedience. This more or less precedes true faith in Christ; yet before an evangelical faith takes place in the heart no proof is procured that the state of a person so circumstanced is better; for still mercy beholds such a one upon the like footing with others. Nay perhaps by sinning against greater light, persons of this stamp may have incurred more guilt than many at ease: for such are greater enemies to the truth than the openly profane. 'Tis true they are in quest of salvation; yet if mercy do not speak to the heart as well as to the ear; they only fall at last into Tophet with greater solemnity. Suppose a man utterly void of saving faith were convinced of the glory of the divine sovereignty and dominion, the omnipresence, holiness, justice, truth, and power of God; the extensiveness, spirituality, and strictness of his law; the binding

nature,

nature, efficacy, and dreadfulnes of its curses; the multitude and heinousness of his sins, both of omission and commission; do we think that these convictions will produce that love which the law requires? If not the heart hath no good in it, because it is void of love. "Would any man, saith *Charnock* vol. i. "page 5, seek God merely because he is, or love him because he is, if he did not know that he should be acceptable unto him?" Certainly apostate angels are convinced of the truth of God's excellencies, but doth this produce a love of him? Truth and good must unite to beget love in our hearts; otherwise the whole gospel system must fall to the ground. When the divine perfections appear not only true and excellent, but also friendly; then we begin to love and not before, and consequently there is no good in any heart before some degree of true faith in the satisfaction of Christ, wherein alone they can appear friendly, hath taken place. This truth is evident from the following passages of holy scripture. viz. 2 Cor. iv. 3. *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.* And again chap. iii. 18. *But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord.* Also chap. iv. 6. *For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* These things

things being premised, we again assert the gospel call to be universal; for it hath no limitation in the scriptures. Even among the Jews no stranger was prohibited from an union with them; and an enjoyment of such privileges as were necessary to salvation. But under the present dispensation the Lord commands all men every where to repent, *Acts xvii. 30.* (or change their minds; be wise again, as the original word signifies,) and what is this but to embrace the Son of God by faith? *John xx. 31.* *These things* (saith the beloved apostle) *are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.* And Paul says, *1 Tim. i. 15.* *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* Legal conviction is neither a title to, nor meetness for mercy; but only necessary to shew the sinner his need of it. Now though hardened sinners be deaf to the call of mercy, yet it ceases not to call such, who either hear or read the gospel; and therein the infinite mercy of God is glorified: yet it hath no call but through the redemption of Jesus Christ. Again, That the gospel call is unlimited is obvious from the gospel feast recorded: *Luke xiv. 21, 23.* for not all that were invited complied with the invitation; for were not the scribes and pharisees, Jews, and Gentile profelytes invited? Certainly they were.

were. But did they all come that were bidden? Surely not. Where would be the sin of unbelief, or slighted mercy, if mercy had no call but to them who obeyed her? For to say a man is forbidden to embrace the salvation set forth in the gospel for want of legal conviction is really dangerous, and widely differs from asserting that such who are wholly destitute of such conviction will not embrace it. Wherefore the universality of the gospel call must be maintained in order to maintain

Secondly, Its freedom. The very epithet given the call of the gospel, *Titus* ii. 11. is expressive of its freedom. Doth not the Greek word there used exclude all merit and signify a free gift? Is not this word viz. *χρη* applied both to the grace of the gospel and the gospel of God's grace? *Acts* xiv. 13. Is it not a call to those who have no money, no worthiness, no meetness? But if it be not universal it cannot be free; for why should any be excluded if not for want of money? How doth such an exclusion comport with *Isai.* lv. 1, 2. compared with *Rev.* xxii. 17? Surely the freedom and universality of this divine call must stand or fall together; and if divested of these characters the persons whom it calls must be possessed of some kind of desert or qualification, but how that can be to the honor of mercy is hard to say. If God's electing grace be not revealed,

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neither to, nor in its objects before the gospel message be embraced, if God's people in their natural estate be not of one particular character, but as variously circumstanced and as differently inclined as the non-elect, if the law of God disapprove of them previous to their effectual calling as much as it doth of others, if conscience properly enlightened by the law no more shun to reprove them than it doth the reprobate, and if no man dare to say he is reprobated who hath not committed the unpardonable sin, by what means may a man know the gospel is, or is not, to him, if it be not free and universal? If you allow it calls upon any, these particulars granted, will establish as a truth, the freedom and universality of its call; and that in the strictest harmony with the grace of effectual calling, whereby mercy will be exalted both in the message and grace of the gospel. This call then is general; for they on whom it calls are rational beings; for were it conditional or particular, it would be to the last degree absurd to imagine that any would receive it, until the conditions were pointed out, and they were sure they were the subjects of them. But if it be unconditional and free, if to the vilest of the vile, nay to all who hear it with the outward ear, mercy then is thereby honored indeed, and the man who obeys the call acts in so doing a part most rational and justifiable; of which act being utterly

utterly incapable but by the special grace of God, the divine sovereignty is also maintained and displayed in the triumph and conquest of mercy, which now not only calls but calls effectually.—

What makes the work of believing so difficult to the awakened mind, is a persuasion that Christ did not pay down the price of redemption for all, but for a few; and yet we are called to look to him as our sin offering, without any evidence that we are of the number of that few.—Here our reason is at once in the greatest perplexity; and is apt to say, it is foolishness, for I may believe that which never was. But is it contrary to reason in obedience to God's call, to believe in his Son? If not whence the objection? The case then must be, God will now be honored in our salvation by faith in his mercy and truth, just in the same way as in our first head, we dishonored him in his truth and holiness; for where would be the excellency of our faith, if God were first to tell us we were elected? Certainly then, they who thus honor him cannot be deceived because their faith is not only an obedience to, but is also of the operation of God wrought in the hearts only of his elect people: this appears from *Ephes. ii. 8, 9. For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast.* It is added, verse the 10th, *For we are his workmanship, created*

in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. The difficulty then of believing is not in coming up, but rather in coming down to God's method of grace, which is to receive salvation freely, and as ungodly in ourselves. This the pride of our nature cannot bear, nor our reason admit; hence that aptitude even in many, who profess the doctrine of particular redemption, to lay some evidence of grace before faith, for a foundation to it. What is this but a seeking to know our election in order to believe? And where is the difficulty of believing if that be known? But admitting this to be just, what would be the consequence? Supposing this evidence to be saving conviction, as 'tis called.— Would not this lead us to prove it by repentance, and then to prove the truth of our repentance by our good works and to lay claim to Christ in consequence thereof? By this practice are we not in danger of mistaking the very nature of faith? For certainly this would be laying the law and works for a foundation of Christ and grace. Conviction then purely legal can be no evidence of salvation, yet there may be much legal conviction in that heart which is purified by faith. Now the former is not that evidence but the latter, which will ever discover itself by an aiming to trust in Christ alone, in obedience to the call of mercy through the call of the gospel. Some may say, is not legal conviction

fiction then of use? I reply, that it is so, has been
 already observed; however in what point of view it is
 to be regarded see *Erskine's Sermons*, vol. ii. p.
 540, where he introduces one objecting "I want
 " a law work, I am not weary and heavy laden,
 " and therefore am not fit to take hold of God's
 " covenant. Answer. If you think to make a law
 " work and humiliation a price in your hand to
 " recommend you to Christ and fit you for him,
 " I tell you that instead of fitting yourself for
 " Christ you are building up a wall between
 " Christ and you, that you shall never get over.
 " If you see an absolute need of Christ and that
 " you are undone without him, do not stand to
 " seek more law work; for that moment you close
 " with Christ by virtue of the covenant of grace,
 " the law has gotten its end, Christ being the
 " end of the law to every one that believeth. It
 " is the weary and heavy laden are called, but
 " that is not to exclude others, who cannot find
 " that disposition in themselves; and they are
 " mentioned in particular in the call, because they
 " are most ready to exclude themselves from hav-
 " any concern in Christ or his covenant." Hence
 it is plain that the gospel call being universal and
 free, divine mercy is thereby exalted; as no
 worth, nor meetness, in the creature is first ex-
 pected; but infinite mercy pursuing infinite mi-
 sery with its solicitations, shews itself in its
 true

true and genuine character, and obviates every
 objection that any self-convicted or self-condemned
 sinner can make : nay it answers all the objec-
 tions which may be made from a supposition of a
 want of conviction, and proves to him that his es-
 tate would not be in the least degree better, were
 he as perfectly convinced as those in Tophet ; and
 with relation to those who neither hear, under-
 stand, nor obey its call, inasmuch as they are
 called, it cannot be said that its overtures are in-
 consistent with its character because none are ex-
 cepted : the nature then of its call is to be con-
 sidered. It is to itself in harmony with all the re-
 vealed perfections of deity. Wherefore it is a
 call to Christ the way, to faith in him ; for mercy
 hath no call but through that divine channel
 wherein the truth, justice, and holiness of God
 are glorified ; for as by Christ these divine attri-
 butes are fully and perfectly glorified ; so the uni-
 versality and freedom of the gospel call declares it
 so to be, and magnifies the mercy of God in har-
 mony therewith ; yea Christ thereby is exalted,
 and the wisdom and power of Jehovah displayed,
 who could reconcile parties so opposite, as these
 divine attributes and sinful man. Therefore
 above all things mistake not the voice of mercy,
 for even the most hardened sinner is not without
 some thoughts of mercy, but what are they ? Cer-
 tainly vain notions thereof. Some of this cha-
 racter

rather think God will shew mercy without a mediator. Others that their good intentions shall give them a title to heaven, and that mercy through Christ will pardon a life of wilful iniquities. A third sort think that meer external worship in conjunction with the merits of Christ will save them. A fourth that mercy's call is a call to legal repentance only; by which they think to enter heaven, supposing Christ's sacrifice will perfect what is lacking. A fifth that legal repentance is conversion; by which they are entitled to Christ, and all the blessings of the new covenant. Now can we think, that these do rightly understand the voice of mercy? For certainly when it calls, not only the sinner's misery, but its own glory in harmony with the glory of all the divine, but injured, perfections of deity is primarily and principally regarded; nay it would have the sovereignty of God exalted, therefore though its call be universal, it is not to the mediator as having really obeyed and died for every individual of Adam's posterity, but to him as an official Savior for every guilty sinner to approach unto and believe in. Its call then is not a revelation of God's will of purpose but precept; and a declaration of every man's duty, that hears the gospel, or to whom Providence sends it. Let none therefore be discouraged, though they have but the bible in their hands; much less those who attend the preaching of the gospel in its truth

truth and purity. To the former I would say, art thou concerned for the salvation of thy soul? And has Providence excluded thee from hearing the word preached in its purity? Be then concerned to read the oracles of truth with attention and prayer. Labor to be convinced what a sinner thou art both by nature and practice, and what sin deserves. Be solicitous to be persuaded that thou neither hast, nor canst have any ground of hope from any righteousness of thine own; then think whether the Lord has not provided a way wherein he may be gracious. Read his word for the discovery thereof with fervent prayer to him to teach thee; and if thou shouldest be so favored as to perceive the way God has revealed in his word, even the atonement and righteousness of his son, labor to see that thou art called upon to embrace it. Perhaps brought thus far thou mayest be under the most sensible feelings of thine own inability. If thou hast right views of Christ the enemies of thy soul will certainly oppose thee. Thy complaint will be that thou art not able to come unto him, thou canst not believe. Now know for thine encouragement, that there is no objection that thou canst make against thyself but mercy hath an answer for. If thou say thou art not sufficiently convinced? It will reply dost thou see thy need of Jesus? If the objection be, thou art too vile, it will answer, that mercy is for the vilest.

vilest. If thou complain thou canst not come, may thou canst not desire to come, her advice will be, to groan unto that God who heard the groanings of his people of old, and came down to deliver them. *Exod. ii. 24.* But to the latter; take heed that thou rest not in the word heard. Ponder thine own sinfulness and misery; view thyself in the glass of God's law and justice; and consider that if one sin deserve everlasting punishment, what thy desert must be. Labor to be convinced that thou art spiritually dead by nature; and if thou never didst believe notwithstanding such rich privileges, Oh rest not till thou canst say with appropriation, verily in the Lord have I righteousness and strength, and to that end consider both the medium and instrument of mercy, even the gospel that calls upon thee.

CHAP. XX.

MERCY DISPLAYED IN THE DIVINE
EFFICIENCY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

1 Cor. ii. 4. 5. *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom: but in demonstration of the spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

WHEN we compare this passage of holy writ, with Rom. iv. 5. and Tit. iii. 5. we immediately own the Lord the Holy Ghost to be the divine efficient of his people's faith; and that the very nature thereof being holy, sanctification must be necessarily the immediate fruit and effect of their justification. The objects of this grace you will see described in our ninth chapter on reference thereto; wherein we have endeavored to prove that all men by nature are alike miserable, equally under the curse and condemnation of God's most righteous law, dead in sin, and utterly destitute of the least spiritual motion. That they are justified as such, Paul positively declares, Rom. iv. 5. *To him (says he) that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* That is, immediately previous to justifying grace they were

were in that state, but when justified, sanctification manifested by true repentance, instantaneously followed. Therefore when God's elect people are apprehended of God, they apprehend him, and apprehending him by faith, love him. Though mercy be so displayed in the call of the gospel as to leave sinners inexcusable, yet when displayed both in word and power, it appears both infinite and sovereign mercy. The one is a call to the miserable, the other is a rendering that call effectual. The former is in word only, but the latter in power. *1 Thes. ii. 5.* Hence our Lord saith, *John vi. 45. Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me.* And again verse 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me; and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.*— Mercy by the gospel call hath left no room for sinners reasonably to object; but though they may object, yet when mercy speaks to the heart, all their unreasonable objections are silenced. Therefore the Lord in his work upon their hearts, deals with them as rational creatures. They are not saved without their reason and in opposition to their wills, but their understandings before dark and blind, being now enlightened, nothing appears to them more rational than the gospel message; and their wills before stubborn and perverse, being sweetly brought into subjection thereto, they embrace the same with delight as most salutary for them, as

well as honorable to God; so that it comes to pass that they are not converted against their wills, but that their very understandings and wills are converted. If then the spirit of God only teaches so as to beget true faith, the knowledge so learnt must be of a different nature than what can be procured by human teaching, though the things taught be the same. Hence it follows that divine mercy attains the end both of Christ's satisfaction and the revelation of God's love to sinners through the gospel; for were not the gospel to be attended at all with the power of the spirit, not one of the fallen race of Adam would embrace it, and consequently none would be saved. The rational mind may perceive the literal meaning of the gospel truths, but it is only supernatural illumination can produce a cordial confidence, bringing forth such fruits as true faith is described to yield. Men are apt to look on the gospel as a simple narrative or relation; in this view it may produce an assent, but nothing more: yet when it is viewed not only as a narrative, but in the nature also of an unconditional, free, and unmerited promise, held forth for every ungodly sinner, yea for him who worketh not, to embrace; the man who is beaten out of all legal hopes and thus views it, is I am apt to think certainly taught by the spirit; and doth indeed with the heart believe. Christ in the gospel is not only represented as the Son of God

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dying for his elect people, but also as the divine medium of salvation for all to behold; so that no one shall be able to say either here, or in another world, — I would have looked to Christ but I had no authority to do so; for in the former view the whole of gospel truths can be considered only as an history or narration, without any promissory encouragement to those who cannot prove their election to believe for salvation. Were we to ponder the different designs of law and gospel it might obviate many important mistakes, to which we are incident. The law in the hand of the spirit is not his ministration to salvation, but condemnation; therefore not that of mercy, but of justice, because it puts only this difference between one sinner and another, viz. the one is convicted, the other unconvicted, yet the state of both still alike. It is only through the gospel that the spirit is a spirit of life; for as the gospel is the ministration of the spirit in respect both to justifying and sanctifying grace; so is it also to adults the alone medium of the spirit, and the only means whereby mercy is effectually glorified by him who calleth. *Rom. ix. 11.* For saith the apostle, *Rom. viii. 2, 3.* *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death; for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh,*

flesh. And *Rom. x. 7.* *So, then Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* To which he adds this important question: *Gal. iii. 2.* *This only would I learn of you, received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* If then the spirit only, through his powerful teaching and application of gospel truths, wherein alone, and not in the law the harmony of the divine perfections is displayed, beget faith in the hearts of perishing sinners: surely then mercy in strict consistence with the honor of every other divine perfection is most gloriously exalted by this divine operation: because now the end is effected, to which, what went before were the glorious means. Let us then be assiduously attentive to God's truths. To be careless how we expect to be saved, or whether God be honored or dishonored in our salvation is highly criminal. If in the methods of his grace he hath primarily consulted his glory, how can we be indifferent about the nature of our confidence? To say if a man love God and his neighbour, that is sufficient, all other things are meer speculations, how dangerous! For mayest thou not be mistaken in thy love? If thou hast not love to Christ in sincerity thou art accursed; and if true love be only the offspring of faith, *Gal. v. 6.* how is faith the meer speculation; or how is it wise to be careless what the nature thereof may be? The apostle James says, chap. ii. 18. *Shew me thy faith without thy*

thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.— Does he therefore discard faith? Or rather does he not put a difference between a true and false confidence? If Abraham's faith was an operative faith as the same apostle testifies, *James ii. 23.* and if Abraham were justified in the manner Paul describes, *Rom. iv. 1, — 5.* take heed lest all thy love, fears, repentance, humility, nay all thy joys and comforts, may not prove a meer delusion; for as is the fountain so are the streams. A true faith is productive of the genuine fruits of holiness, consequently a false faith only of their semblance.

CHAP. XXI.

MERCY IN THE HANDS OF CHRIST, AS
PROPHET AND KING OF HIS ELECT.

John xvii. 20. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

THOUGH the third person in the ever-blessed Trinity be the divine efficient both to convince and to convert the children of men; yet he works not in the heart of any but through the medium of Christ's prophetic and kingly offices. *Matt. xxviii. 18.* All power (saith our Lord) is given unto

unto me in heaven and in earth: intimating, that he was qualified to bring about the divine purposes of mercy relative to his elect people; for whom he had made complete satisfaction to justice in order to that end: for he had in view the fulfilment of his great design, in giving eternal life to as many as the father had given him; to commence according to divine appointment, be preserved and maintained here, and at last perfected in a state of glory. If the divine spirit work in the consciences of the wicked as a spirit of bondage, it is the effect of the administration of Christ's prophetic and kingly offices; *Rev. i. 16. xix. 15, 21.* for the kingdom of the Messiah is not only within his church, but both external and internal amongst men in general also. Hence his authority and government extend to all kingdoms and states, communities and societies, whether civil or sacred, either in a way of influence or permission; as also in, and over the conscience of every individual, all which is necessary for the preservation and final felicity of his people already called, as well as the gathering his elect uncalled out of the world that lies in wickedness. That Christ hath this plenitude of power or authority will appear if we consult the following passages, viz. *Col. i. 16, 18.* *That by him (viz. Christ) were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities,*

or powers: all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, and he is the head of the body the church: who is the beginning, the first born, from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. The divine perfections being glorified by Christ's righteousness and death, and he obtaining by his intercession, founded on his satisfaction, the mercy promised, does as our spiritual Joseph bestow the spirit of grace upon his people in his own appointed time and way: for it is by the energy of this divine spirit with which as mediator he is anointed, that dead sinners by him are quickened. That Christ in his human nature, considered in conjunction with the divine, should receive the spirit without measure, for the above and for all the purposes of his mediation, seems most meet and fit; not only that the third person in the ever-blessed Trinity, but that Christ according to the constitution of his complex person might be glorified. As God, it was becoming he should deliver his counsels with authority and efficacy, being a teacher sent from heaven, and the original of all wisdom; besides who should reveal the secrets of the Father but the Son? And that they should be conveyed through the manhood, condescension to our frailty, and encouragement to our hope, required it; for whilst the Majesty of heaven was veiled in our nature, we could receive his instructions without

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that amazement and terror, which would otherwise have attended them. *Deut. xviii. 15.—26.* Saving grace now dwelling in the human nature of Christ in union with the divine Word, and being in it as a fountain redundant; this is a full proof that mercy has now free course to the sinful race of man, to the honor of all the divine attributes; for it is communicated through that channel or medium in which they were glorified; the same order taking place in the application of salvation as in the operation of it. The Father was not incarnate, because he was the guardian of the rights and laws of heaven, he being the first person; to him it was more suitable to exact satisfaction and receive intercession, nor would the incarnation of the Holy Spirit have consisted with that order which we have revealed in holy writ; for he is set forth therein as the power of God, *Luke i. 35.* by whom the Father and the Son execute all things: nay as the spirit of the Father and the Son, by whose operation the human nature of Christ was raised up from the dead.—Therefore in effectual calling it is from the mercy of the Father, through the mediation of the Son, by the power of the Spirit, that souls are quickened: and this mediation of Christ respects not only his satisfaction to law and justice, but the execution of his prophetic and kingly offices in the illumination and sanctification of the mind savingly
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to believe on him, by which we are translated from the kingdom of darkness into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. "Who could more fitly restore us to favor and the right of children than the only begotten and only beloved Son, who is the singular and everlasting object of his Father's delight? Our relation to God is an imitation and expression of Christ's. He is a Son by nature, a servant by condescension; we are servants by nature, and sons by grace and favor, *Eph. i. 5.* Our adoption into the line of heaven is by purchase. The eternal Son took flesh and was made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. *Rom. viii. 19.* Who was more fit to repair the image of God in man, and beautify his nature that was defiled with sin, than the Son, who is the express image of his Father's person, *Heb. i. 3.* and brightness and beauty itself? Who can better communicate the divine counsels to us than the eternal Word?"—*Bates's Harmony*, p. 93. From all which it is obvious, that not only all the divine excellencies are honored through the redemption of Christ, but mercy derives an additional lustre in that we are to seek the blessings of mercy by him, who experimentally is acquainted with the desert of our iniquities; for says the apostle to the *Hebrews*, chap. iv. 15, 16. *We have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feel-*

ings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. As the power of God ceases not to be infinite when limited in its operations; so his mercy cannot be denied this character, because it is exemplified but on a few: for the subjects thereof being in number limited, does not alter its nature. It is infinite mercy, because the objects thereof were in a state of infinite wretchedness, and the impediments to their salvation infinite in their nature, which that Savior who is infinite hath removed; and also in that it raises its subjects to infinite happiness and purity in point of duration. Nay it deserves this character as it is dispensed in its blessings by him who is infinite, yet possessed of a nature like unto our own infinitely dignified by being wonderfully united to the nature of God. Are any of us then in a state of security, blind and stupid, insensible of our sins, and the evil of them? Are we unconvinced of our original guilt and pollution? If we be let us then go to Jesus, that we may be sensible of our own deplorable and dangerous condition; it is only by him we can obtain a discovery of ourselves, or see the need we stand in of his salvation; but on the contrary are we convinced what atrocious sinners we have been? Do we see our sins have affronted the majesty, holiness,

finess, and goodness of God? Are we sensible
 that by sin we have denied the divine authority, been
 at enmity with infinite holiness, and proved un-
 grateful, notwithstanding innumerable benefits
 natural and providential? Do our consciences
 charge us not only with sins against the law, but
 against the gospel? Do we perceive each of our
 iniquities to be of infinite malignity? Are we con-
 vinced we are in a state of sin, yea dead in sin;
 nay do we esteem ourselves transgressors in Adam?
 Do we despair of salvation by our own supposed
 righteousness either in whole or in part? Do we
 indeed desire to renounce our own righteousness
 and ability, sensible that we are utterly unrighte-
 ous, and that we cannot spiritually quicken our
 own souls? Though these be our circumstances
 let us not esteem our state better because of these
 things, and say we are in divine favor: for we are
 sensible of our misery. This would be a conclu-
 sion very absurd, since the deepest legal conviction
 is not conversion; yea it would argue that our
 convictions were but slight, because they who are
 most convinced think they are the least so: for to
 suppose we are fully convinced is an argument of
 our blindness. However, if the language of our
 hearts be, what shall we do to be saved; let us
 look both from the law and ourselves to Jesus, as
 the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the
 world; even to his atonement and righteousness
 for

for complete acceptance; but if we find we cannot look, cannot come to him, may we then turn our eye to him in the characters of prophet and king, to illuminate and draw us, to shew us his suitableness, and incline our hearts to come, and to trust in him alone for divine favor, convinced that he is the only way to a reconciled God, and also to confide for quickening and renewing grace, that, that repentance which is the fruit of a genuine love may be begotten in us.

C H A P. XXII.

MERCY GLORIFIED BY THE SUBORDINATE
MEANS, THROUGH WHICH ITS SPECIAL
BLESSINGS ARE BESTOWED.

Luke i. 6. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

THOUGH no man will truly seek God until he be quickened and made spiritually alive; and though all the duties which a natural man can perform be utterly void of all real good, yet this consideration that it is the divine purpose to have mercy on many of the fallen children of Adam, demands the attention, diligence, and assiduity of every

every individual, in the exercise of all means which God hath appointed to bring home his people. With relation to worldly acquisitions especially if they be of extraordinary worth, how industrious are men to obtain them; though they be persuaded but one of a thousand will certainly succeed? No attention, study, nor diligence is in this case wanting, whilst the concerns of the soul are either totally or shamefully neglected; this plainly proves man's inability to soul concerns is not of a natural but a moral nature; that is, he sees them not as lovely, he has no liking to them, and because the carnal mind is enmity against God, and therefore impossible it should love the Lord for his own sake, (as all believers do, in a greater or less degree) man can now scarcely be persuaded to pay any attention to things of a religious nature, even upon the meer principles of self-love. Hence the backwardness to think of God, to pray unto him, to read his word, to examine and compare the heart with the law of God, to meditate, to converse with serious christians, and patiently to attend to the arguments advanced in favor of divine truths. However a man dead in trespasses and sins may do so much, yet where is the man that doth it? Self-love in most men hath a greater respect to the body's welfare than the soul's. This is an atrocious crime pointed directly against mercy. Its language must be, either that God is
all

all mercy, or he will shew them no mercy. But if either of these positions be true; why any concern at all? If God be all mercy, then we may live as we list; or if there be no mercy for us, what avail our endeavors? Though this be a natural inference deduced from the above disposition of self-love, yet men having confused notions of God's mercy and justice, suppose these attributes in him in their manifestation respecting the salvation of sinners, to be like mercy and justice exercised by them; therefore they will be doing something to obtain the divine favor be it ever so little, though at the same time the interests of this life are preferred to the next. If conscience were permitted to speak out, it would presently declare that both mercy and justice in God are infinite, and must by some means or other harmonize in man's salvation, and to slight the concerns of mercy is to reject it. If to be unfeelingly concerned about our eternal state, is to be preferring our present welfare to our future, is so absurd as above-mentioned, and if it be a truth that God's perfections must harmonize, or we are lost for ever; why so backward to investigate this truth, and to become spiritually and savingly acquainted with it? If truth had declared that none of Adam's posterity should be saved, or had pointed out the persons by name who should: duties and ordinances to that purpose would have been quite unprofitable

unprofitable to all in the former case, and in the latter to those who were openly rejected ; but as no one knows his election but by effectual calling, it is highly reasonable every individual should use such means, whereby God usually bestows that blessing. Though a man without faith cannot pray in spirit, yet ought he entirely to neglect prayer ? Though he may not have the hearing ear, must he then turn away his ear from hearing ? Though the bible be to him as a sealed book, ought he to reject it ? Yea in every means God has appointed should not men be employed, though they cannot be spiritually so before grace received ? “ Works, “ faith the Church of England, done before the “ grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his spirit are not pleasant to God, for as much as they “ spring not out of faith in Jesus Christ, neither “ do they make men meet to receive grace, or “ (as the school authors say) deserve the grace of “ congruity ; yea rather for that they are not “ done as God hath willed and commanded them “ to be done, we doubt not, but they have the “ nature of sin.” Article 13. Though all our legal endeavors will neither qualify nor quicken, though our attendance upon all duties and ordinances, neither deserve, nor render us meet for grace ; yet if we have any apprehensions of divine mercy, justice requires that we use every possible means in order to be truly and properly in-

answer

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formed

formed of the nature of mercy ; and whatsoever relates unto it, the way wherein it is gracious, the blessings it bestows, on whom it calls, and the nature of its call. But if men cast off all regard for their souls, and reject the duties and ordinances of religion, they certainly are not in the way to hear its voice, even in its outward call; much less as it speaks to the heart ; for generally the most atrocious sinners to whom mercy is frequently in a saving manner revealed, are through Divine Providence brought to one or another of the Lord's appointments, (notwithstanding at first the baseness of their motive) ere the gracious work is wrought upon their heart. What is mercy glorified, but mercy declared, manifested, and displayed ? Though the appointment of such ordinances as sinners are bound to observe be not the highest display of mercy, yet it is an open declaration that God is both merciful and willing to shew mercy. If hope had been entirely cut off where would have been the use of ordinances ? Direct hatred is the fruit of despair ; hence Satan curses the fountain of blessedness. Wherefore all the various, but false religions that are in the world, do in some measure declare that God is merciful ; how much more then those ordinances which he himself hath appointed ! When we consider how the holiness, goodness, majesty, and truth of God have been injured and affronted through sin,

what

what divine justice demands as a satisfaction, what the moral circumstance of every sinner is, does not the faintest discovery of mercy in God to them declare its nature to be infinite? If this be allowed, mercy then is certainly glorified; for as infinite power is declared to be such as well in the existence of an atom as in the creation of the universe, so doth the establishment of ordinances declare as truly God's boundless mercy, as the blessedness of saints in glory. The imperfection of our thoughts hereof arises from an ignorance of our desert, what the demerit of sin is, and what a depraved condition we are in. Did we see our misery, the least token from God of everlasting favor, not only attained but attainable would appear infinite. How irrational then is the conduct of the sinner! Though his religious actions be not good because not agreeable to the divine will both in matter and form, yet because he fails in the latter is the former to be neglected? If they were right in both he would be no longer in an unregenerate state, and consequently be for ever blessed. How then does it behove him to wait at the pool of ordinances, if peradventure the Lord may bless him, and still persevere in God's ways to seek him, until he seeks him aright!

C H A P. XXIII.

MERCY GLORIFIED IN REGENERATION.

Titus iii. 5. According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration.

REGENERATION is such a change upon the whole human soul that now there dwells in it a proper aptitude, tendency and inclination to divine and spiritual things which before had no existence. This, as a work done, we are to conceive of not according to the idea of an act, but a principle. This change is the effect or operation of the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit, and in adults should be considered as the immediate and first proper fruit of effectual calling: special vocation being the opening of the heart, regeneration the heart opened. Were we to consider the former as an action of the Holy Spirit upon the mind subsequent to regeneration, souls would be born again without his agency. And if we ourselves be no way active therein as indeed we are not, our new birth must exist without a cause. The calling of the spirit of which we now speak is not the simple ministry of the word, neither can any ordinances whatsoever have that appellation; nor is there in them the least power to regenerate

regenerate the heart. In the creation of natural light the omnipotent word of Jehovah was spoken; then light existed; so in the new creation God first commands, then spiritual light existeth. Our hearts are in total darkness before he shines into them; and when he does so, then they are illuminated. Hence the apostle says, *2 Cor. iv. 6. God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* The priority of effectual calling to regeneration in point of order only, and not of time, best agrees with the gospel ministry, yea with what truth declares. Peter in his first epistle, chap. i. 23. saith, *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* But if effectual calling were after regeneration, the gospel could not be that instrument that it is declared to be. Again in James i. 18. it is said, *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth;* on which Dr. Guise thus paraphrases, “ who believe have a most eminent and endearing
 “ demonstration, that the best of all blessings derive from him; as it is not from any wisdom,
 “ or power, worthiness, or merit in us, but merely
 “ of his own good will, and sovereign pleasure,
 “ according to his abundant mercy, that he has
 “ regenerated and begotten us to a lively hope of
 “ an everlasting inheritance, *John i. 13. 1 Pet. i.*

" 3, 4. by means of the gospel; which is his true
 " and faithful word, and is rendered efficacious
 " in the hand of the spirit, for producing the
 " new birth, and all the holiness and happiness
 " that ensue upon it." As then the gospel per-
 suades morally, the Spirit of God through the
 gospel persuades efficaciously. The former is
 like a voice to the naturally dead; the latter is as
 a voice which quickens the dead. As the call of
 Christ to Lazarus was both quickening and com-
 manding; because instantly obeyed; so is the
 Spirit's voice to the heart by the gospel. When
 by a figure effectual calling is put for the glorious
 things it calls unto, it then may be considered as
 the fruit of regeneration, as also regeneration it-
 self. Nay it may take in faith and all the fruits of
 faith, and may comprehend not only all the
 graces of the Spirit, but all the workings and
 operations of those graces; and still more, may
 include every thing that is excellent and praise-
 worthy in the christian's conversation and practice.
 Hence Paul to the *Thessalonians* saith, *1 Thes. iv.*
7. God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holi-
ness. And the apostle Peter adds, *1 Pet. v. 10.*
But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his
eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Now who doth not see
 that this call is really prior to the enjoyment of
 the things called to? Are we not called before we
 enter the heavenly kingdom? If we be, doth not
 this

this divine call to the kingdom of grace precede that gracious state to which we are called? But to be satisfied in this matter let us attend to the apostle Paul. *Rom. ix. 11. For the children* (says he) *being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.* If the latter part of this verse is to be taken actively it proves the person acting to be God, and therefore must not only precede justification, but even regeneration itself, in respect to order. However we must fix this as a certain truth, that effectual calling, regeneration, faith in Christ Jesus, love unto, and fear of him, nay every grace of God's Spirit begin all to be in the same instant in the man whom the Lord calls; yet all in their respective order. Now as effectual calling intends the acting of almighty power in changing the heart of man, wherein the creature is wholly passive; and regeneration the change wrought. We begin with the latter, as being not only the sure pledge of eternal glory, but the commencement thereof; and the source and spring of all spiritual acts, either of mind or body, put forth by the creature. Regeneration says *Turretin Comp. page 372.*
"Continet vero mutationem, totius hominis; puta;
"intellectus, voluntatis, conscientiae, affectuum, poten-
"tiarum." i. e. It comprises indeed a change of
the whole man; that is to say, of the intellect,
will,

will, conscience, affections and powers. Therefore as observed before, the man hath now a suitable aptitude, tendency, and inclination both for, and towards divine and spiritual things; that is, he is now spiritually alive. He hath an eye to behold Christ, he hath an ear to hear his voice, and an heart to love and fear him. To describe this source of spiritual good by its fruits and effects would be to anticipate our subject, and yet to enlarge on it as a first principle is not easy; however we may safely say that it is not a physical change, for then its subject would not be the same man as before this change took place; and to affirm it purely ethical or moral would border on rashness, yet as it is produced through the instrumentality of truth, it appears to be of an ethical nature, and what more I dare not determine; thus much we may affirm, that all the moral suasion possible would never effect it, nor can in the least contribute unto it, unless as an instrument in the hand of divine omnipotence. *Ephes. ii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17.* Regeneration though it be perfect in its parts no faculty being without it, nor any grace but what it contains, yet it doth not render man its subject as holy as the saints in glory, because the very same natural powers and faculties, of which it is the accident, are as universally as before, polluted with original sin, only now there is in every faculty two contrary principles. Original

ginal pollution has now a competitor, which is fully inclined to make war against it, and not suffer it to reign in any respect whatsoever ; neither in the understanding, memory, conscience, imagination, will or affections, and will give it no quarter until it expire. This new man at first is but weak and tender like an infant, though perfect in his parts, yet is capable of growth ; but these particulars more properly relate to the fruits of regeneration. Peter saith, *1 Pet. ii. 2. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.* And John in his first epistle, chap. ii. 12, 13. speaks of little children, young men, and fathers in Christ. What is here observed of the new, the contrary may be observed of the old man, for though perfect in all his parts, he is not in a prosperous but crucified state. As the new man like the house of David waxeth stronger and stronger, the old man like the house of Saul waxeth weaker and weaker ; and though it give many a struggle like a dying man, yet it is but to sink the lower. A dying man is perfectly a man until the last gasp be fetched, so the body of sin is perfect until it expire ; and then the new man being entirely at liberty acts without opposition. Amongst good men there still remain different sentiments, touching the nature of this divine operation on the soul ; however to suppose it to be an independent principle must certainly be injurious to God's

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glory :

glory : for is there any creature in the universe independent of God ? Doth not the same power which created all things out of nothing maintain in being the whole creation ? And would it not sink into its primitive nothing, were he to suspend the operations of his power ? If this be true in the natural creation, certainly it is as true in the spiritual creation. Wherefore the psalmist prays, *Psal. li. 11. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me.* If then regeneration be the fruit of effectual calling, and effectual calling be through the instrumentality of the gospel, if the gospel be an exhibition of Christ's satisfaction to law and justice, and a call of mercy to sinners through it, certainly mercy is then glorified in the regeneration of God's people : nay therein all the divine attributes and perfections are glorified both in word and deed, for if we were to suppose none saved by power, the price of redemption would be diminished in its lustre, and in our view the divine perfections come short of their honor. What a ground of comfort have we here for the true christian ! To such a one would I say O soul ! hast thou any evidences of thy regeneration ? If thou hast thy language is, God is exalted. His holiness, justice, truth and mercy, nay his sovereignty also are all displayed in thee ; for thou hast that upon thee, even the righteousness of Christ which honors the former ; and that be-
 stowed

flowed upon, and wrought in thee, which displays the latter. Examine then what the Lord hath done for thee. Labor to be convinced that the good work is begun in thine heart. See whether thou dost not truly love the gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ, and a reconciled God in him. Examine if sin be not hateful to thee because Christ atoned for it, righteousness lovely because it is the image of thy Savior. See whether God's people be amiable in thy view, and for this reason chiefly because they are the trophies of gospel grace. By this practice thou wilt give, in some measure, the praise required and not only subjectively, but in an active and objective manner magnify the great wonders of divine grace, through the redemption which the only begotten Son of God hath effected.

To the man himself who is indeed regenerate
of God that these are the full fruits of regeneration
certainly, or that it appears from the word
of a converted man; but not that conversion
all these things must be allowed as the experience
in recovery, out of this miserable estate. Now
impossibility of contributing in the least degree to
thouly that the mind is convinced of the absolute
power over what shall I do to be saved? And
else in the fullness of the punishment due to it, and
it will be the harvest of sin, as a deadly to seed
appears it, as most vile and loathsome.

C H A P. XXIV.

CONVERSION AND FAITH HONOR MERCY,
IN HARMONY WITH EVERY MORAL
ATTRIBUTE OF JEHOVAH.

*John vi. 45. Every man therefore that hath heard,
and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.*

SOME there are who observe in handling the subject of conversion, that first the mind perceives, or hath a conviction of its guiltiness and impurity; discovers the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the malignity of its nature, as contrary to the holy law of God; and in consequence of which abhors it, as most vile and loathsome. Secondly, it discerns the demerit of sin, so as heartily to acquiesce in the justice of the punishment due to it, and hence cries out what shall I do to be saved? And thirdly, that the mind is convinced of the absolute impossibility of contributing in the least degree to its recovery, out of this miserable estate. Now all these things must be allowed as the experience of a converted man; but not that conversion therein consists, or that it appears from the word of God that these are the first fruits of regeneration. To the man himself who is indeed regenerated,

rated, as also to his christian companions who listen to his complaints, this order may appear to be real. However that these are in reality the first fruits of the new birth, or that the essence of saving conversion previous to justification consists therein must be denied ; for thus viewed what can those things possibly be more than the operations of the divine Spirit upon the conscience, through the instrumentality of the law only ? Which if granted I leave the reader to draw the inference. If they be of an evangelical nature, then are they the fruit of such a conversion, and not the conversion itself, nor previous to it : conversion being considered as the first true and saving turn of the heart to God, and also the first fruit and effect of regeneration. Now this will appear if we consider that the law is neither an instrument to quicken the dead in sin, nor an object of faith for justification, no nor our way to God ; because all who seek him in that way shall never find him ; yea thereby instead of turning to, they turn from him : *For as many (says an inspired apostle) as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Gal. iii. 10.* And in another place he asserts, *Rom. vii. 5,* the motions of sin which were by the law did work in his members to bring forth fruit unto death.— If then the law worketh wrath, *Rom. iv. 15.* if instead of mortifying sin it only irritates it, and render the sinner through despair more sinful ;

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may if sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in the apostle all manner of concupiscence, add to all this if by the operation of the law on the conscience sin becomes exceedingly sinful, or a sinner, *Rom. vii. 8,—13.* how is it possible that legal workings only should be indeed the first and immediate fruit of regeneration, or that conversion should consist therein? Wherefore it is evident the more refined our legal notions are, if we misplace or attribute too much unto them; that is, if we either make them conditions to faith, or qualifications for faith, or if we suppose them to be the fruits, or evidences of special grace prior to believing, so much the more are they pernicious and dangerous. But on the other hand, if such convictions as are noticed in the beginning of this chapter be held as the fruit and effect of a true gospel confidence, though the subject of such a confidence may not be sensible he is so, then they may be very salutary and useful; and produced, as so many evidences of true love to God and his law. To conclude (in respect to one's own salvation) that such convictions spring from an evangelical principle is very difficult, unless the mind is conscious that it hath some true perceptions of, and thirstings after Christ. Dr. Owen in his *Treatise on Forgiveness*, page 64, where he speaks of the convictions not of one who never believed on Christ, says, "How shall a
" man

" man know that his humiliation is evangelical,
 " that his sorrow is according to God ? It is not
 " from hence he may be resolved that he doth not
 " in it as Cain did, who cried that his sins were
 " greater than he could bear, and so departed
 " from the presence of the Lord ; nor as Judas
 " did, who repented and hanged himself ; nor as
 " Felix did who trembled for a while, and then re-
 " turned to his lusts ; nor as the Jews did mentioned
 " by the prophet, pine away under their iniquities
 " because of their vexation ; nor doth he divert his
 " thoughts to other things to relieve his soul in
 " his trouble, nor fix upon a righteousness of his
 " own, nor slothfully lie down under his perplex-
 " ity ; but in the midst of it applies himself to
 " God in Christ for pardon and mercy, and it is
 " the soul's application unto God for forgiveness,
 " and not its sense of sin, that gives unto God the
 " glory of his grace." In page 50 he says " There
 " is a two fold sense of sin ; the one is general
 " and notional whereby a man knows what sin is,
 " that himself is a sinner, that he is guilty of this
 " or that, these or those sins, only his heart is not
 " affected proportionally to the discovery and
 " knowledge which he hath of these things : the
 " other is active and efficacious, the soul being
 " acquainted with the nature of sin, with its own
 " guilt in reference to sin in general, as also to
 " this or that sin in particular, is universally in-
 " fluenced

“fluenced by that apprehension unto suitable
 “affections and operations.”——Now that the
 Doctor was far from making conviction to be con-
 version you may perceive by his words following :
 for he adds, “Even this is two-fold. First, le-
 “gal or antecedaneous unto conversion. Second-
 “ly, evangelical and previous to the recovery
 “from depths :” alluding to a believer returning
 from great backslidings. Neither does he consider
 the former as intervening between regeneration
 and conversion ; for in page 334, he observes as
 follows : “Regeneration (says he) doth not in
 “order of time precede the soul’s interest in for-
 “giveness, that is with God ; or its being made
 “partaker of the pardon of sin, I say no more
 “but that it doth not precede in order of time,
 “not determining which hath precedency in or-
 “der of nature, that I confess to be the method
 “which the gospel leads unto, viz. that absolution,
 “acquittment, or the pardon of sin is the founda-
 “tion of the communication of all saving grace
 “unto the soul, and so precedeth all grace in the
 “sinner whatever ; but because this absolution
 “or pardon of sin is to be received by faith,
 “whereby the soul is really made partaker of it,
 “and all the benefits belonging thereto, and that
 “faith also is the radical grace, which we re-
 “ceive in regeneration : for it is by faith that
 “our hearts are purified as an instrument in the
 “hand

" hand of the great purifier the Spirit of God. I place
 " these two together, and shall not dispute as to
 " their priority in nature; but in time the one doth
 " not precede the other." If the Doctor doubted
 whether justification or regeneration was first in
 order of nature, certainly he could not esteem
 conversion any thing else but the turning of the
 mind, in a way of believing, unto the Lord Jesus
 Christ as the justification of sinners; or a putting
 forth an act of the mind on the satisfaction of
 Christ, as the way to God for acceptance and justi-
 fication: on the first coming of the sinner unto
 Christ, in a way of faith; and to God by him. —
 That this is the truth I think we cannot well ques-
 tion if we pay any deference to the words follow-
 ing: *John xiv. 6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the*
way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the
Father but by me. Nay if we consider well the scrip-
 ture prefixed to this chapter we must so conclude;
 for if the teaching of the Father leadeth to Christ,
 and Christ be the alone way to the Father, as the
 Father of mercies, conversion and the first motion
 of faith must be one and the same thing. Observe
 then by conversion we do not mean the first work
 of God on the heart. Conversion, according to
 our present view, includes the action of the crea-
 ture, for being turned we turn, and thereby is
 distinguished from regeneration; and being the
 first spiritual action of the regenerate man, is to

be also distinguished from that conversion which is the fruit of justification, and springs from true repentance: therefore we are to esteem it so, as immediately, in point of order, preceding justification, and not confound it with the conversion of God's people after sins and backslidings; what we now intend seems to be expressed by the following scriptures, *Zech. ix. 12. Turn ye to the strong hold ye prisoners of hope.* *John vii. 37. and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out:* which certainly intends the first motion of the new creature terminating on Christ as the material cause of justification. Faith, previous to this act, hath no virtue at all to move or excite the other graces to action. Nay it is nothing in itself separate from Christ its grand object; for it is only the radical grace, as it lays hold on Christ as the way to mercy. The very form of it consists in a perception of, and trust to the complete satisfaction of Jesus; without which it hath no existence in the minds of adults. Therefore all evidences of grace we should consider as evidences of justification, and not of our worthiness or meetness for it. To take notice what the properties of a justifying faith are, is not to our present purpose; this shall be done hereafter: but with respect to its nature as it justifies, we say, that in the man who worketh not, and is yet in an ungodly estate, it begins to act by virtue alone of the gospel warrant, through the

the energy of the divine spirit on Christ's satisfaction as its object, for favor with God as its end. The gospel then being the medium of regeneration, as that by which the spirit is bestowed, and through which by his almighty power this divine operation is wrought; so also is it in his hand the instrument of our conversion, and therein mercy appears to be eminently glorified, because the objects of this mercy are those who before were ungodly and worked not to obtain it; for they being drawn by divine grace and coming by the medium of Christ's death and righteousness only, they honor all the divine perfections, declaring thereby that in Christ alone they all harmonize with mercy, to the glory of God. Hath Christ established by his satisfaction a sure foundation for the sinner, to the honor of divine holiness, truth, and justice? They by coming thereto by the authority of the gospel warrant, set to their seal that God is glorified in Christ, and true to his declarations of mercy to the chief of sinners.— Though it be our duty to compare our hearts and ways with the law of God, though we ought to be convinced of our guilt and misery, yet as sinners we should use the law, not as a ministration of righteousness, but of condemnation; not in order to be better, but to be sensible how vile and weak we are; not as a ministration of life, but of death; persuaded that no sense of our deplorable

state, nor any conviction of what the law expects, though united, can possibly produce the least good thought. May we not then as others, seek by it to support our false expectations, but rather to destroy them until at last being driven out of all good opinion of ourselves, we earnestly seek for grace to come to Jesus, and to God through him, as sinners that have nothing to plead but pure mercy.

O H A P. XXV.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, A DISPLAY OF MERCY.

Rom. iii. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.

JUSTIFICATION in the sight of God is to be considered in a proper and forensic sense, expressed by absolution in judgment, or a reckoning and declaring any one just. When the Lord does so by any of his creatures, they cannot but be blessed; and those that be not justified in his sight, cannot but be cursed: hence the absurdity of moral goodness in man condemned. Though the law justifies no man, yet thousands of the human race the Lord hath justified, and therein displayed

played all the grandeur and excellency of his mercy. In this matter every perception, thought, desire, inclination, purpose, resolution, word, and action, which hath any relation to the moral law he rejects, because they come not up to what the law requires. Therefore justification is thro' the boundless mercy and unmeasurable compassion of our God. But we may say, how is it that infinite purity can delight in creatures void of all good; who have done nothing but sinned against him, yea are dead to him as a God of holiness; yet even but one out of the many millions of sins of which they are guilty deserve his eternal vengeance and displeasure? Though this be an important question, the scripture hath furnished us with an answer. *Rom. iii. 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ.* This is full to our satisfaction; for here we see holiness, justice, and truth in all their splendor, brightness, and refulgence. To bring the least good thought by way of addition to this work of redemption, would be infinitely more foolish than to light a candle to the sun when in the meridian. It would be a dishonor to the Son of God, an affront to these divine attributes, and a flat denial of the infinity of God's mercy; for what is the best righteousness of man before justification but unrighteousness, being destitute of love the only source of moral good? Some may ques-
tion

tion this doctrine and reply, though men love not God as they should, yet we cannot believe they are utterly void thereof, and therefore they should do something towards their justification.— But can you tell me how there can be any true love to God in that soul that is excluded the divine favor? If a man be not justified fully, he is not justified at all. This must be either by works or by grace. It is impossible to be mixed. And were it so Christ would be dishonored, his righteousness as the righteousness of God appear insufficient, and not one divine attribute glorified: for on this plan the righteousness of Christ is limited. Now we know that two finites can never constitute an infinite, which is vainly supposed by uniting the righteousness of the sinner to that of Christ.— The justification therefore the gospel maintains is through the satisfaction of Jesus by faith only; and by faith because it profits nothing unless received. Now when the appointed time is fully come that God's elect people are by faith to receive this divine satisfaction, then mercy takes such a possession of them as it will never quit, until it hath accomplished all its purposes. Having proceeded thus far we may now consider conversion in a more ample manner than treated in the preceding chapter, and view it not only in relation to the gospel but also to the law; for as the essence of faith is to justify, so the fruit of justification is an entire conversion

conversion of the whole man to God. Hence such views of God and all things belonging to him, quite different in nature from what before were; because the faith which hath now taken place being the faith of God's elect, all things are beheld after another sort than is the nature of a legal or historical faith to do. First then it beholds God not altogether as a severe and inexorable judge; now the man the subject of this grace sees him though as a being of infinite purity and holiness, and who will in no wise spare the guilty, yet as a God of unbounded love and mercy also. Though before he was most pungently convinced of the divine justice and holiness, yet he viewed not these perfections so as to approve of them, yea the truth of God did most grievously afflict him, and instead of being his joy was his sorrow; nay all the divine attributes appeared unto him not as friends, but as enemies. Again. It is the property of justifying faith to perceive the mediator in all his offices far otherwise than viewed by one who is the subject of an historical and legal faith only. All true believers are cast as into a gospel mould, and therefore their views are evangelical. But ere justifying faith took place in any believer his apprehensions of Christ, notwithstanding all his gifts, were but of a legal nature. Perhaps he expected Christ would enable him to reconcile himself to God by assisting him so to act, whereby
 he

he might, if not merit, yet qualify himself for the divine favor. But now in a supernatural manner he looks to Christ for grace that he may by faith apprehend him alone for justification; for it is not to be supposed where justifying faith is, there is always the evidence of it, so as that the subject thereof is sure he possesses it; far otherwise, because such persons are frequently under the greatest doubts, and feel the workings of unbelief more than others, yet their trust is like the mariner's needle to the north pole, it can fix no where but on Christ for divine acceptance; and when diverted from this it still inclines thereto. Now they look not to Christ, as heretofore, for grace to save themselves, but to trust in him only for salvation; which they see to be alone through his satisfaction, eying him as constituted a prophet and king for the purpose of drawing sinners to himself. Now is the Redeemer in all his characters, become the object of the believer's confidence; he trusts in him for grace to be conformed to the gospel, that through gospel conformity the law as the rule of his conduct may be his delight; he sees Christ suitable to all his miseries and necessities. If he views him as a prophet he looks to be enlightened; if as a king to be subjugated and protected; and if as a priest at the right hand of God, he looks to him to interceed in his behalf; nay he in some measure beholds Christ as
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his husband, brother, friend, and kinsman, according as he is informed of these relations by the word of truth. The property also of this faith is to look on the scriptures not as the word of man, but as the word of God. What is revealed therein it readily credits, nay delights in. To pick and cull from this divine treasure, and to despise what remains, it abhors. It is sufficient that it is the word of the Lord; that is what faith regards. But a meer historical faith doth not so. It does not approve of all that is revealed, for though it beholds truth, it is with irksomeness; neither doth regard it according to the ends for which it is made known, but on the contrary is apt to legalize the gospel, and gospelize the law. An historical faith views the sacred oracles as the revelation of a severe exactor and terrible judge. A saving faith beholds them as containing the will of the father of mercies; the good pleasure of a precious Jesus, and sees it is all calculated for the glory of God, and for the real profit and benefit of the soul. O how sweet, says faith, are the promises! How glorious are the commands of my heavenly Father! Though these be the properties of faith, yet as its subject hath another principle, in nature quite opposite, and which constantly militates with this grace, views of a different kind may frequently appear to sense, which however will be always matter of grief and sorrow to the believer. We

must further observe, that the providences of God
 are accounted by faith as most wise, holy and
 gracious. It saith, *Psalm xlv. 16. All the paths of*
the Lord doe mercy and truth unto such as keep his cove-
nant and his testimonies. Yea it exclaims *Psalm cxlv.*
13. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, (and holy in
all his works. An historical and legal faith is of a
 different sentiment: being sinfully concerned for
 self, it cannot approve of the Lord's providences
 unless they be grateful to senseless As for God's
 glory it does not regard: and whatever is afflic-
 tive it considers as a judgment: but saving faith
 knows how to extract good out of evil, sweet out
 of bitter: yea in proportion to its strength and
 exercise will make the soul rejoice in the sharpest
 tribulation: and more than this, will turn the evil
 of sin to advantage: for when it is loaded there-
 with it is inclined to more than usual diligence,
 and in the event raises the soul to a greater pitch
 in spirituality and heavenly-mindedness than be-
 fore, sin began its onset. True faith abhors the
 flesh, the world, and the devil; it sees them so
 as to detest and loath them. A legal faith though
 it may oppose, yet abhors not: were it not for
 fear of judgment and damnation its opposition
 would cease. How contrary the grace we are
 now considering: for it looks on them not so
 much in the light of enemies to the soul, as ene-
 mies to Christ, to the glory of God, and grievous

ed the Holy Spirit. When his is burdened with their power and prevalence, its application for strength to Christ; knowing in him there is a rich abundance, and that he is an overflowing fountain of grace; this he does because it feels its own weakness, and knows that in itself it is nothing. Its nature is such that it can never be at peace with these enemies; for when unable to vanquish it will stoutly contend, and when faint will still oppose. Lastly the people of God it sees as amiable, the appointments of God as desirable; yea it says of Christ and all that appertains unto him, with the spouse in the Canticles, chap. v. 16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely!* Herein we may perceive a conversion of the whole soul unto God. The thoughts, desires and affections turned unto him. As the mind and will were before inclined to Christ for acceptance, now they are turned in a way of love and delight to the things which make for his glory; the fruit whereof is such an external conversion as that sin hath no more dominion over them in their conversation and carriage. Therefore we may add that the subjects of this grace are turned from sin to righteousness, from vanity to sobriety, and from the honors, pleasures, and profits of this world to godliness. Conversion then may be considered both before and after justification. — Before, as expressive of the first motion of faith

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towards Christ : and after it as significant of the immediate effect of Christ believed on ; which is a going forth of the heart to and for God in the true exercise of every grace ; and consequently inclusive of delight in the law as well as the gospel ; for it is declared, 1 John v. 4. *Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

C H A P. XXVI.

SANCTIFICATION THE EFFECT OF JUSTIFYING MERCY.

Acts xv. 9. And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

THESE words without any explanation, sufficiently vindicate the title of this chapter ; they shew also that the Lord had removed the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, of Mo-
saic ceremonies ; resolving to save both from the guilt and pollution of sin by the energy of his spirit through faith in his Son without the intervention of typical services, the antitype being not only come, but having finished the whole work of redemption ; received a public testimony thereof from the divine Father, by his resurrec-
tion

tion from the dead; and finally ascended to the holiest of all, and there sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. Though sanctification, considered as a principle, may according to the opinion of some, be formed in regeneration; yet without doubt its holy actions are not the cause but the effect of justification by faith; otherwise we should be justified as godly, and not as ungodly. Brine in his Treatise on various Subjects asserts page 246 that "Regeneration is sanctification radically."— Nay the scripture seems to look this way, though it maintains at the same time, as in the text before us, that if any one be not by faith justified, he is as yet in an unregenerate estate. These things have induced some to question (among whom was the noted Dr. Owen) which in the order of nature is to be reckoned first, regeneration or justifying faith. Owen on Forgiveness, page 384. The advancement of purity and spirituality in our souls is our sanctification progressively considered; and in this view may be distinguished from conversion. It is not a new addition of graces but a more strong and vigorous exercise of those implanted in regeneration, not simply their motion, for thus we have considered conversion in the last chapter, but an increasing strength in every grace against the operations and actings of the old man in all his various members; yea it may comprehend

prehend every act of faith for justification, subsequent to the first act thereof for that purpose. For though justifying faith in its after-actings for justification builds not on the evidence of sanctification, yet these motions thereof spring from a sanctified heart. Now if conversion to holiness be the fruit of justification by faith, then consequently progressive holiness or sanctification must be so also. May it appear that in the same way in which holiness first began to act, so its workings must be maintained and completed. Now in order to proceed it is previously necessary to say something touching the various graces of God's spirit, their connexion and production. We would then enquire

First, What is the nature of justifying faith?

The answer is, that the nature of it consists in assurance and appropriation. The denial of this principle by many of the Lord's people amounts not to a proof of its fallacy; for their rejection of it springs from a mistake of terms, and not of matter. But that we may be satisfied on this point we will enquire also

First, Negatively: what this assurance is not?

Secondly, What it is?

First, The assurance of faith is not a persuasion in the man who hath it of his particular election; this

this is only deduced from the evidence of effectual calling. Neither is it an assurance to its subject that Christ in very deed stood in his law place or room; and that when satisfaction was made to divine justice, it was made for him; because redemption then for the elect was finished. This is as impossible as the former particular. Nor is it his assured belief he is effectually called; here many confine the term assurance of faith. And because experience frequently evinces that many of the Lord's people enjoy not such an assurance of faith, they esteem it rather a privilege, than the nature of this grace. Now in this view the proof of their conclusion is just. But this is the assurance of sense, resulting either from present or past experience. But

Secondly, What is this assurance? Answer.—It is a persuasion wrought in the heart by the spirit of God, through the gospel only, that the objects to be looked to for salvation, are both sufficient and true, and therefore cannot deceive him who looks. Hence it is rather an assurance that the grounds or foundation of confidence will not fail, than an assurance to its subject that he truly believes. The manslayer under the law pressed by the avenger of blood was persuaded, because of the Lord's appointment, that the city of refuge to which he fled would prove to him a sure asylum: so in faith there

there is an assurance of the sufficiency of Christ to protect from pursuing justice, and also that God commands sinners to take refuge in him. Now what is the immediate consequence of this but taking actual refuge accordingly? This is tantamount to appropriation: for it is a making that of particular benefit, which before lay indefinite in the grant. If the Lord declare the satisfaction of his only begotten Son, to be his own appointment for sinners indefinitely to look unto; and if Christ hath said, that they who so look have everlasting life; what can this confidence in Christ be but a belief of the person looking, that his sins were laid upon him, and that Christ was a complete substitute in his stead, to present him unrebukeable in the sight of infinite holiness? If this be not granted, how then should the sinner apprehend Christ for his personal justification in the divine sight? Will the belief that he is a substitute for the elect only be sufficient? Or can he properly rest on the satisfaction of Christ for justification, if he dare not believe he satisfied for him? But if he do properly believe that Christ suffered for his iniquities, made complete satisfaction on his account, he believes it not by virtue of any vain conclusion that he was elected from eternity to salvation, nor in that he is not so bad as others: nor because he is already in a state of grace, (which cannot possibly be previous to faith;) but because

truth

truth hath said; 1 Tim. i. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* See more on this head—Hervey, Theron and Aspasio, vol. iii. p. 348, Theron is introduced objecting against this point—says he “No, Aspasio; neither would a
 “persuasion that the summer house is mine. Aspasio,—true: but a belief that Christ is mine is
 “like entering the summer house.” The weak christian from hence hath no room to be discouraged. Yet he may be apt to think that if faith be assurance, he is no believer; for such being attentive to their own hearts, and judging of this grace according to their feelings, are frequently apt to think they are destitute of it. These I would refer to what Boston says in his Notes on the Marrow of Modern Divinity, page 160. However, as many may not be furnished with that book, I will quote the passage: “First he (the author) doth
 “not here teach that assurance of faith whereby
 “believers are certainly assured that they are in
 “the state of grace, the which is founded upon the
 “evidence of grace, but an assurance which is in
 “faith, in the direct acts thereof, founded upon
 “the word of God, Mark xvi. 15, 16. John iii.
 “16. and this is nothing else but a fiducial appropriating persuasion. Secondly, he doth
 “not determine this assurance, or persuasion, to
 “be full or to exclude doubting; he saith not he
 “fully

" fully persuaded, but be verily persuaded, which
 " speaks only the reality of the persuasion, and
 " doth not at all concern the degree of it. And
 " it is manifest from his distinguishing between
 " faith of adherence, and faith of evidence, page
 " 101, that according to him saving faith may be
 " without evidence. And so one may have this
 " assurance and persuasion, and yet not know as-
 " suredly that he hath it, but need marks to dis-
 " cover it by; for though a man cannot but be
 " conscious of an act of his own soul, as to the
 " substance of the act, yet he may be in the dark,
 " as to the specifical nature of it; than which no-
 " thing is more ordinary amongst serious chris-
 " tians." Though this explanation of faith be a
 support to the weak christian, yet it is far from
 admitting no certainty in this grace; for if there
 were, unbelief would be no sin; and we should
 adopt the popish doctrine, that it is lawful to
 doubt. The Lord's veracity and Christ's suffici-
 ency render the least doubt criminal. Hope is
 the offspring of faith; and in order next unto it.
 When faith first believes on Christ for justifica-
 tion hope immediately expects the blessings there-
 of. As faith hath no other foundation in the first
 instance, than the gospel promise through Christ to
 sinners indefinitely, so hath hope. Therefore
 Christ alone is the foundation of hope; because
 God invites and commands sinners to hope in him.

As faith first (unsupported by any evidence of grace received) confides; so hope expects acceptance and salvation independent thereof. I speak now of the first and weakest acts of these graces, and not of a faith and hope, which have much sensible comfort and experience to support them. When faith first beholds Christ for justification, it then confides in him for holiness. What is the fruit hereof? Why, hope immediately expects both acceptance and purity, for it is not satisfied but with sensible enjoyment. If faith saith, grace is mine, and glory is mine, hope expects them. Doth faith say all the promises of God are in Christ, yea and in him Amen? Hope looks out for their fulfilment. These then, as active graces, have the precedence; but if we would speak of peace, as it is peace with God, we ought certainly to place it before hope; for what is it less than the purification of the conscience? Or an heart sprinkled from an evil conscience. *Heb. ix. 14. x. 22.* Dr. Gill in his exposition of *Rom. v. 1.* says "Peace with God stands in the first place; and is so called to distinguish it from peace with men; which persons, though justified by faith in Christ's righteousness, may not have." As peace with God goes before hope, so must joy: peace begets joy. Wherefore Paul praying in behalf of the Romans, for an increase of their hope, says *Rom. xv. 13.* *Now the God of hope fill*

you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

For these graces succeed: faith as light issues from its source, because justifying faith presents to the soul a God reconciled and pacified. Indeed the subject of this grace may think far otherwise, but then this arises from the deep sense the believer hath of the holiness, justice and majesty of God, the great sense of his own vileness, and the stupendous demerit of iniquity. Also the mighty workings of corruption and temptation prevent him from a discovery of his faith in its feeble state. And because he feels himself more miserable than when he could delight in forbidden objects, he thinks the peace and joy of the Lord have not as yet possessed his bosom. From what hath been observed it appears that faith, as it justifies, the graces of peace, joy, and hope relate to the gospel, and precede all those which have respect to both law and gospel jointly as a rule of duty.——

The first of those alluded to is love. This regards in the first place the Lord's plan of redemption, and then the ends for which it was laid. By this rule it behoves us to try the nature of our love. A supposed love of God's law separate and apart from a love to his gospel may deceive us. It is impossible such a love can be the fruit of a justifying faith, or spring from a true hope in the Lord's mercy. This is the love of the Pharisee and self-righteous.

righteous. *Gal. ii. 19.* *I (says Paul) through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.*— And again he says, *chap. v. 6.* *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.* This breathes a different spirit: for what is a true love to God but a delight in his glory! Wherefore if we think to love the law of God in such a way, wherein it is impossible God should be thereby glorified, (and this mistake all are guilty of indeed, whose love runs not in a gospel channel) it is certainly a dangerous delusion. True love is first taken up with Christ and his redemption. *Unto you therefore which believe (says Peter) he is precious. 1 Pet. ii. 7.* Then it longs for a conformity to his image, because it is the end for which Christ was given, even to redeem us by power as well as by price. *Titus ii. 14.* *Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Let us now then ask ourselves the following questions: do I indeed love the gospel of Christ? Do I love it because as in a glass, I there see the death and righteousness of Christ in the behalf of sinners? Is it precious unto me because the person of Christ is therein displayed, and the harmony of the divine perfections discovered? Do I love the Lord's people both as objects of his mercy, and subjects of his grace; that is, do

I love them because God loves them, and because they bear his image? Again. How stands my heart affected towards the scriptures of truth? Are they precious unto me? Do I peruse them with holy breathings, that they may be to me as the word of God indeed? Do I long to have them written in my heart and life? Do I compare myself with the law that I may discover the necessity of the gospel? And do I trust in the gospel that I may be conformed to the law? Do I love Christ in all his offices, characters and relations; and for all the purposes to which his mediation was appointed and ordained? Now a love of this sort begets true godly sorrow. It is so called because God is the author of it. It is not the operation of free-will, produced by natural conscience, neither is it of a legal nature and from the fear of hell, because then love would not be the source thereof; but it is a sorrow for God, as some express it, or on account of God, his honor, interest and glory; and therefore respects law and gospel in that order we have observed above. It is a displeasure with sin as an opposition to both, and as in direct contrariety to all the perfections of Jehovah: his goodness, grace and mercy; his holiness, justice and truth. Now from this grace flows genuine repentance. Repentance in holy scripture is to be understood in various senses, which not being properly attended to by many, has

has been creative of much injury and prejudice to the souls of men: for apprehending this word in a too contracted and limited sense, they have been led to deny the free-grace of God exhibited in the gospel, and to lay the foundation of hope, both for time and eternity on the law. What consequences have followed let the lives and dispositions of professing christians in general declare. *Turretin in his Compend. Theologiae, page 371, says, "Regeneration is as the quickening of the dead. Repentance is a return to a sound mind. Conversion is a change and amendment of life, expressed by the original word μετανοια." In this view it is difficult to apprehend his meaning, unless we suppose he considers the same original word, as expressive both of the cause and effect; for we know it is most frequently used to signify the grace of repentance. Wherefore his meaning may be thus: regeneration is spiritual life. Repentance the motion of the mind in consequence thereof (so we have considered conversion in chapter the 24th) and conversion the effect of that motion, comprehending both justification and sanctification as cause and effect. This view of repentance seems to be confirmed by the following passages, viz. *Mark i. 15. Repent ye, and believe the gospel. Acts iii. 19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out: that is, change your minds and believe the gospel.* This construction*

construction of the word repentance appears just from *Heb. xii. 17*. For he (viz. Esau) found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears: that is, he could not induce Isaac to change his mind. Again, *Rom. xi. 29*. For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. God being without change and alteration, and continuing his peculiar blessings to his people for ever. However dubious this word may be in *Acts xi. 28*, yet if we suppose repentance to import a purpose of amendment in our moral conduct, with respect to what the law solely considered requires of us, (in which view most consider it as prior to, and a condition of faith for justification) we then conclude that it springs from godly sorrow, the fruit of that faith which works by love. The nature of this repentance is described, *2 Cor. vii. 11*. "For behold this self-same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge." On which, and the verse preceding, Doctor Guyse very justly paraphrases, says he; (ver. 10.) "For spiritual
 " grief and contrition of soul like yours, Godward,
 " and according to his will, on account of offences
 " committed against him has the happiest tenden-
 " cies and effects: it produces that evangelical
 " repentance, under apprehensions of the mercy
 " of

" of God in Christ, which consists in a thorough
 " change of the mind, heart and life, with regard
 " to sin and duty; and is connected with, and will
 " certainly issue in, a complete deliverance from
 " sin and wrath, and advancement to eternal
 " glory; yea in the very nature of things, as well
 " as by the ordination of God, it always goes be-
 " fore, and is practised more or less 'till an actual
 " enjoyment of final salvation; and so this is an
 " excellent sort of repentance, that need not,
 " ought not, nor ever was, or will be repented
 " of." Here we may mention the different sorts
 of repentance which are not the offspring of an
 evangelical faith in Christ, and the mercy of God
 through him, and therefore are not evidential of
 a state of grace. The first is a legal repentance,
Matt. xxvii. 3. arising from an apprehension of
 justice, blended with unscriptural views of mercy.
 If mercy under every view be excluded, then it
 becomes a desperate repentance, as in Judas, Cain,
 Pharaoh and Ahab. Indeed it must be acknow-
 ledged that legal conviction producing legal re-
 pentance, more or less, generally precedes rege-
 neration and faith; but as it precedes faith, it is
 accompanied with no true hatred of sin, but only
 a dreadful fear of punishment. The third sort is
 a late repentance, for the most part unsound, yet
 let no one suppose that there is no possibility of
 true repentance at the eleventh hour. The fourth

kind is an indiscreet repentance, such as superstitious persons are subjects of, shewn by their watchings, fastings, pilgrimages, scourging their bodies, &c. In the fifth place we may add, a feigned repentance. Sixthly, an inconstant repentance; for the subjects of it return to their sins. And lastly, an imperfect repentance; as in those who repent of some sins and not of others, which they know to be sins. But on verse 11, the Doctor shews the nature of true repentance.—

“ Now it is the first and not the last of these kinds
 “ of repentance, that my letter was the means of
 “ producing in you: for observe, as I myself do
 “ with great pleasure and thankfulness to God,
 “ your ingenuous mourning on account of what
 “ you have done, and of what has been found
 “ among you against him, has, through divine
 “ grace, wrought in an holy manner, and brought
 “ forth fruits meet for repentance.” Observe
 “ what thoughtfulness, care, and diligence, it
 “ worked in you, to comply with my orders, and
 “ to approve yourselves to God in rectifying what
 “ was amiss: yea, what happy influence it had
 “ upon you to take such measures as might fur-
 “ nish out a plea (*παροχρημα*) against any accusation,
 “ as if you would partake with the incestuous per-
 “ son in his guilt; or would allow of, indulge,
 “ or connive at any sin in yourselves or others:
 “ yea, what holy indignation and warm resent-
 “ ment

" ment it raised in your souls against your own
 " iniquities, and against the sins of that delin-
 " quent and his abettors, who had so notoriously
 " dishonored the name of Christ, and both trou-
 " bled and defiled the church : yea, what an aw-
 " ful reverential fear of God, and of his displea-
 " sure and sore rebukes it wrought in you, toge-
 " ther with an humble jealousy over yourselves,
 " and cautious fear and concern lest any accursed
 " thing should be still found with you ; or lest
 " through the power of temptation ye should fall
 " into the like or any other sins again, to pro-
 " voke the Lord to anger : yea, what earnest de-
 " sire it excited in you after a thorough reformation,
 " by putting away that evil person and every evil
 " thing from among you ; (*1 Cor. v. 13.*) and by
 " doing what might be well pleasing to God thro'
 " Jesus Christ, and might be to your own and
 " others edification, satisfaction, advantage, and
 " comfort : yea, what sacred zeal it inflamed you
 " with for the glory of God, the credit of reli-
 " gion, and of my apostolic authority, and for
 " the peace and order of the church : yea, be-
 " hold, how it made you take a sort of holy ven-
 " geance upon yourselves, like persons that could
 " not tell how to forgive yourselves, in reflection
 " on your own defaults ; and how it engaged
 " you to inflict deserved punishment on the scan-
 " dalous offender, by casting him out of your
 " holy

" holy communion. " In all these penitential and
 " commendable ways of expressing your godly
 " sorrow with regard to what has been so faulty
 " among you, ye have shewn that your consciences
 " have been purged from its guilt by the blood
 " of Christ; and that ye as a church stand clear
 " from all further charges on that account, as
 " being forgiven of God, and no longer to be re-
 " proached or reprov'd for it by men." Hence
 we may perceive the source, order, and nature
 of evangelical repentance; for what the apostle
 hath deliver'd relative to the Corinthians touch-
 ing the incestuous person, is certainly a pattern
 of the repentance of God's people, in reference
 to every sin of which they are convinc'd; for their
 filial fear, which is consistent with the strongest
 confidence in God's love and mercy, teaches them
 to regard the holiness of God out of love, and
 therefore to fly from every iniquity, and prose-
 cute those things which are divinely commanded.
 In the Old Testament also we have a description
 of this repentance for it is said in *Zech. xii. 10.*
And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced,
(viz. Christ) and they shall mourn for him as one
mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for
him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. Fear
 which is next to be considered is a grace of the
 Spirit, the offspring of faith and love, arising
 from a perception of God's mercy, holiness, and
 greatness,

greatness; and thence loath to displease God by sin. Wherefore the Psalmist saith, *Psalm cxxx. 4. There is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared.* This fear is filial or childlike. The nature thereof is to keep back from vice and to constrain to duty, and to whatever may glorify the name of God. It is an awe of God's holiness and majesty as engaged to bless, and therefore not a fear of falling away. It is not in contrariety to assurance but presumption; whence it follows, the stronger our faith is the greater our fear will be. Humility or humbleness of mind, is not a self-disregard or carelessness; does not consist in will-worship, compliments, and civility, nor a dissembling submission, but in an inward sight and sense of our great unworthiness. It is quick to discern temptation. Hypocrisy it hates. To sufferings and afflictions it submits, and is content in every dispensation of Providence. In its acting towards God it arrogates no excellency: *Psalm cxv. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake,* is its language: therefore self-righteousness is inconsistent with this grace. It is said, *Hab. ii. 4. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.* And Paul adds, *1 Cor. i. 30, 31. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written,*

he

he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. He who by justifying faith submits himself to the Lord's plan of salvation, doth honor God and Christ in the gospel; and through a submission to the gospel, pays a genuine deference to the law, as in the hands of a mediator. To increase therefore in humility towards God is to possess an increase of faith in Christ, as our worthiness and sufficiency. Humility with respect to our neighbour springs from faith's perception of the glories and perfections of God; from an enlarged spiritual acquaintance with the divine law, a deep and special knowledge of the gospel of Christ, and as the fruit of these things, from a striking conviction of what we ought to be. Thus taught we now appear so mean in our own view that we are apt to think ourselves the chief of sinners, and least of saints.—When the prophet Isaiah beheld the Lord he cries out, *Isaiah vi. 5. Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.* Like to this is the language of Job, chap. xlii. 56. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.—Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* If then we desire to grow in this grace, let us pray for a larger discovery of the divine perfections engaged in our behalf, through the redemption of Christ, which being so beheld will not fail to produce a deep sense of our own nothingness,

and

and a ready will to glorify God in all things. These being the principal graces, parts, or members of the new man, demanded our more particular attention; the remaining graces to be considered being either a compound of the former, or deriving their motion or operation from the opposition which sin, Satan, and the world offer to the new creature, require not so particular an explication: for even the grace of patience would not be necessary, were there no enemies to contend with. But to return. Patience is the product of faith and humility. Faith says, the Lord is faithful; but patience speaks the humble language of the prophet, *Lam. iii. 26. It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.* Hence it appears nearly allied to hope, for hope simply is expectation, but patience a quiet expectation of promised blessings. Therefore faith believes, hope expects, and patience waits for the salvation promised, notwithstanding sins, temptations, afflictions, and discouragements. It is the property of this grace to bear up against carnal sense and reason, and to prefer the word of a promising God to all sensible appearances. Now as it honors divine truth promising, so likewise it will not fail to reverence the divine holiness and purity. Its voice is, *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Lam. iii. 39.* Yea it will say with the prophet in verse
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the 22d. *It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* A patient waiting then for a God of mercy is always connected with a quiet submission to a God of holiness: this appears from Micah vii. 9. *I will bear (says the prophet) the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.* The christian being the subject of these graces, now contends with his old man (the most dangerous of all his enemies) prompted and excited by satan, and the world; as these increase and grow in vigor and strength, and the body of sin and death is weakened within us, our sanctification as a progressive work is evidenced. This warfare is not between the body and the mind, but between the body of sin in the mind, consisting of the understanding, will, and affections, aiming at nothing less than a full and perfect manifestation of its nature and power, through the members of the natural body. I say this warfare is between this corrupt and active principle, and that new nature of which we have been speaking, which aims not only to prevent the former from exposing itself to view, but also to mortify it in its inward motions and operations, and that in all the natural faculties of soul and body. As the old man hath many members, so hath the new. In the former there is ignorance, unbelief,

unbelief, diffidence, pride, forgetfulness, slavish fear, hardness of heart, love of ease, pleasure, and profit, &c. All these attempt to reign in the understanding, memory, conscience, imagination, will, and affections: aiming in their turns to settle the man either in a presumptuous course of life, to the maintenance of whatsoever is grateful to self-worth, or self-ease; or to drive him to utter despair, and so to dishonor God by an entire denial of his mercy. In the new man there is knowledge or faith, hope, peace, joy, love, godly sorrow, repentance, humility, filial fear, and patience. As the former only in pretence seeks the prosperity of self, or when detected of its deceit the open ruin of it; the latter, viz. the new man, seeks the truest interest of self, in subordination to the glory of God. Now what may be said in respect to these opposite principles, the same may be affirmed touching the corruptions, and graces of which they are respectively the body.—As the former acting offensively is counteracted by the latter; so the latter acting offensively is counteracted by the former. This warfare is in every natural faculty of the soul. The principle of sin tends to God's dishonor, and a full perfection of guilt and misery. The gracious principle to God's glory, and to complete holiness and happiness.—Hence a regenerate man is not perfectly holy in any one thought or deed; neither is he as an un-

regenerate man in any thing perfectly evil ; that is, with respect to his acts either of mind or body. He neither can do good as glorified saints, nor do evil as the natural man doth. As the first motions of the old man are through unbelief ; so of the new through faith. Unbelief increasing, strengthens all other corruptions ; so faith the other graces. The corrupt principle is powerfully excited by satan and the world, either in a way of allurements or terror. If satan and the world cannot charm they will endeavor to drive to desperation ; 'tis their business to threaten in order to lull. But if the divine Spirit through the law awakens, and by the gospel draws, satan then will stir up the old man to unbelief, and endeavor to drive the soul to despair ; which the world will promote by its entanglements and persecutions.— As the old man is excited by satan and the world, so is the new man by the spirit of God. And as the former have their various means to that end, so the divine Spirit uses means with his people, such as prayer, reading, and hearing the word, meditation, examination, christian conference, and other ordinances, which he draws unto ; and in and by which he quickens and strengthens to the spiritual combat : nay sometimes he uses sore afflictions and temptations, when the old man hath produced in them a very faint resistance.— Some persons there are who deny that the law of
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sin is seated in the minds of the regenerate; affirming that they are perfect in their minds, and that the defilement to which they are subject comes from the body only. There say they the law of sin only resides. What is the consequence of this doctrine but that they are as perfect in their souls as ever they can be, and at death they need not look for a further change? How can such persons look to the righteousness of Christ at that solemn moment, if they believe themselves perfect already? The meetness of the christian through his imperfect sanctification here can only be esteemed such, as it is an earnest of the fulness of it; therefore he is to trust to the mercy of God through Christ alone for a perfection in holiness, as he did at first for the commencement thereof. The law of sin is a privative evil, cleaving to the soul in its every faculty, and will be so even to the last gasp. Were the soul to enter eternity as the subject of sin and grace it would be unfit for heaven, because it would be still sinful, as every believer is whilst in the body. What does the apostle Paul mean by fleshly wisdom and fleshly mind, *2 Cor. i. 12. Col. ii. 18.* if the soul be not primarily and chiefly the subject of sin? Why does he exhort the believing Corinthians to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of spirit, if their spirits were entirely perfect? *2 Cor. vii. 1.* Or the Romans to be transformed by the renewing

of their mind, if their mind were capable of no further renewal? *Rom. xii. 2.* But you will answer, does not the apostle say, *Rom. vii. 25.* *So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin?* I reply, if the word flesh here mentioned means nothing more than the human body, what construction will you put upon the fifth verse of the same chapter? His words are in that verse, *For when we were in the flesh the motions of sin which were by the law did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death.* If you say the union of the soul and body, you will by the rule of consequence assert, that the apostle was not in the body, when he wrote this chapter. As this cannot be his meaning, let us compare this verse with the 18th of the same chapter, and we shall find that by being in the flesh evidently intends the reign and rule of the old man; for although the apostle in this verse last mentioned, says not that he was then in the flesh, yet without doubt he gives us to understand that the flesh was still in him, even in all the faculties of his mind, but deprived of its absolute dominion and sway through a principle of a contrary nature called spirit, of which he was then also the subject. But if an objection should be still raised, affirming that by being in the flesh is intended the moral death both of soul and body; and by a regenerate estate is intended the absolute purity of the soul, yet

yet under the entire dominion of the body considered as the seat of original pollution ; why should the apostle pray that the believing Romans might be transformed in the renewing of their mind, whose mind stood in need of no renewal ? *Rom. xii. 2.* Or how was it possible that the apostle by the members of his body should perform one good act, even materially considered, if the body as wholly sinful controuled the soul ; for he says, verse 14. *We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.* Leaving then these dreams we conclude, that the word mind contained in the 23d and 25th verses is a figurative expression, intending the new man in contradistinction to the old ; or that corrupt principle which still cleaves to every faculty of soul and body. Doctor Owen in his Treatise of the Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainder of Indwelling Sin in Believers, observes that the seat of this law of sin is in the heart. *Ecclef. ix. 3. Mat. xv. 19. Gen. vi. 5. Luke vi. 45.* “ The heart (says he) in
 “ the scripture is variously used. Sometimes for the
 “ mind and understanding ; sometimes for the will ;
 “ sometimes for the affections ; sometimes for the
 “ conscience ; sometimes for the whole soul. Gene-
 “ rally it denotes the whole soul of man, and all
 “ the faculties of it ; not absolutely, but as they
 “ are all one principle of moral operations, as
 “ they

" they all concur in doing good or evil. The
 " mind as it enquireth, discerneth, and judgeth
 " what is to be done, what refused; the will as
 " it chuseth, or refuseth, and avoids; the affec-
 " tions as they like, or dislike, cleave to, or have
 " an averſation from that which is propoſed to
 " them; the conſcience as it warns and deter-
 " mines, are altogether called the heart. And
 " in this ſenſe it is that we ſay, the ſeat and ſub-
 " ject of this law of ſin is the heart of man." —

Pages 27, 28, 29. Thus having taken ſome notice
 of the nature and ſeat of this warfare, we will
 proceed to obſerve ſome other graces which ariſe
 therefrom, or are concerned therein.—Zeal then
 is alſo a grace of God's Spirit. It is an earneſt
 deſire of doing good, and hindering evil, joined
 with ſound knowledge, and fervent love of God's
 glory, and our neighbour's good. 'Tis an affec-
 tion of grief and anger flowing from love; for
 what a man ardently loveth he is ſollicitous to pro-
 mote, and is grieved when it is diſcountenanced.
 Hence the deſcription of the Lord's people. *Titus*
ii. 14, Who gave himſelf for us that he might redeem us
from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar
people, zealous of good works. What militates with
 this grace is lukewarmneſs, or ſpiritual indiffe-
 rence, ariſing from the prevalence of corruption
 over the graces already mentioned. Long-ſuffer-
 ing is a grace very neceſſary in the chriſtian war-
 fare.

fare. It supposes a clear and perspicuous perception of evil : and not only anger, but the highest indignation against it. And in this respect it resembles the patience and forbearance of God, who being omniscient, omnipotent, and infinitely holy, yet long endures with sinners who grievously offend him. This grace springs from faith, love, and patience. Faith and love beget christian fortitude, and patience added thereto begets long-suffering. Paul saw the preciousness and necessity hereof, and therefore prayed that the Colossians chap. i. 11. might be strengthened with all might, according to the Lord's glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. Gentleness is a mixture of love and humility, which discovers itself by a sweetness and easiness of carriage to others ; quite opposite to contention and strife. It is studious to be useful and beneficial, moved thereto from cordial pity and compassion. Goodness is love to men drawn forth into practice ; would not do any thing prejudicial unto them, and is ready to administer unto their necessities whether relative to their souls or bodies. Meekness is a grace enabling us to suffer abuses and injuries, without a desire of revenge. It differs from long-suffering, being a dismissal of anger, but where there is just cause thereof. Meekness is slow thereto and not easily provoked, teachable and easy to be persuaded, submissive to God
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and Christ. not elated with prosperity. It shews itself amongst men by self-diffidence as contrasted with self-conceit, and by a gospel innocency and simplicity : its source is faith, love, and humility. Where this grace resides there is an acknowledgment of self-emptiness and insufficiency, a conformity to Christ's will through love, and an aptitude to refer unto God every injury received, according to the exhortation given, *Rom. xii. 19. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath : for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.* Now before we begin to consider the operation of these graces, it is necessary to say something of temperance also ; which is the continence or moderation of the mind in all things, that are not spiritual and eternal ; and likewise is of use touching self-estimation, christian sympathy and condescension, hence the exhortation *Rom. xii. 3, 16.* " For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly (or with moderation) according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." And again.— " Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate : be not wise in your own conceits." Wherefore this grace hath relation to all the affections, and respects all things relating to the body, as meat, drink, apparel, recreation, and so forth.

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We come now to experience, which is nothing more than the effect of grace in act, for the word signifies trial, or proof. Before grace then be in exercise there can be no experience. The gospel exhorts sinners to come to Christ by faith for pardon, acceptance, and salvation. When this is done experience hath a being and not before.—Hence a justifying faith is proved to be such by the train of other graces which follow. These being in act and exercise under the influence of faith, against their respective opposing corruptions, experience increaseth; which experience is nothing else than the sealing witness, or operative testimony of the divine Spirit to the truth of his word of grace. Now as the actings of faith and other graces increase in strength, so doth experience. It is the property of experience to beget evidence, which is not presently discerned by its subject, unless the former be strong and lively.—There may be experience in many a heart for months and years together where there is little evidence, because experience may be weak and slow, yet some of the Lord's people almost as soon as they are the subjects of faith are assured they are so. Here it would be necessary to say something in respect to that faith which is the fruit of experience; as faith the source thereof has been before particularly noticed. The faith then of which we now speak is what most people call the

faith of evidence, that is, a belief in God's people that they are the subjects of grace. For it is a perception of the soul of its own gracious actings, whence it infers that it is indeed born again. This is always in proportion to the strength of faith, properly so called, and which we have long since handled. 'Tis certain a strong faith, and which is only founded on the veracity of God and sufficiency of Christ, may have many and mighty enemies to contend with, and before these enemies are subdued the faith of evidence may be weak and languid; yet when the former obtains the victory, the latter, viz. the faith of evidence will be strengthened and revived; and the more and greater the victories of the believer are, the brighter it will shine. Hence Paul's exhortation, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith: prove your ownelves: know ye not your ownelves how that Christ is in you except ye be reprobates," (adversaries) or there being something amiss in you? The clearer and stronger a fiducial faith is in its actings the more evident it is to its subject both in itself and fruits, provided he be skillful in the word of righteousness, and capable of drawing a proper inference. This perception or evidence of faith first considered, some call, as observed above, the faith of evidence.—Others the reflex act of faith, which epithets appear very suitable to scripture, as 1 John ii. 3.—x. 19,

It may be increased even to full assurance in a sovereign way and manner, by an overpowering irradiation of the divine spirit. Ambrose upon Evidences saith, *Evid. 17.* "My assurance of faith, and my spiritual safety, is first both by the evidence of internal vision or reflection; for I know that I believe as certainly as I know that I live." Though this may be and is undoubtedly the case with many, yet only with such as have been of some considerable standing in the school of Christ: because it is not enough to be sensible of inward feelings, but to be able to judge of them, which is not always the case with young christians; for I speak not of assurance in apprehension but in reality. It must be granted that where the ground of faith is spiritually discerned, and the nature and actings of faith clearly known, it certainly may be self-evident in its most lively actings; but it is usually from the vigorous actings of the other graces, as the immediate effect thereof, that most christians derive their faith of evidence. Having now in a very brief manner taken some notice of the various grades of the spirit of God in the hearts of believers, their order, and nature; hinted at the spiritual combat of which they are the subjects; and just touched on the experiences and evidences of God's people, would reassume the truth of which this chapter is the subject, viz. that sanctification as a

progressive work is the effect of justifying mercy. As effectual calling, regeneration, conversion, and justification, are in point of order only, and not of time, one before another, so sanctification as here considered, is the fruit of justification; yet they both commenced at the same instant. The term or expression sanctification hath in scripture various senses, but as we have fixed the sense already in which we choose to consider it, therefore to say how differently it is understood would be needless. It is generally divided into two parts, viz. mortification, and vivification. But as this distinction is difficult to be conceived unless it be by the effects produced on its subjects, viz. the hearts and lives of men, being thereby weaned from sin and inclined to holiness, I would say that this work consists in a progressive increase of all the graces of the spirit in vigor and strength, and that in an evangelical and gospel order. There is no greater impediment to the growth of sanctification than the self-righteousness and self-sufficiency of the heart. Many sinful corruptions, yea many outward acts of iniquity, are not half so detrimental; because faith in the redemption of Christ, both in itself and fruits, may rise above them, for the Lord vouchsafes to pardon the daily infirmities of his heritage. But the former strikes at the whole life of the christian; its aim is to separate him from the foundation of all his hopes both

both for time and eternity; whilst the self-sufficiency of his heart would cut him off from the fountain of all divine and spiritual supplies. If salvation be of grace, if it be through Christ our head, what can be a greater evil than to expect it for our own doings, and imagine to spin it out of our own bowels? This then is the tendency of a legal principle. Though when justification takes place it be deprived of its dominion, yet it is very powerful in those who are but babes in Christ. Wherefore the apostle Peter exhorts the saints to whom he wrote, *1 Pet. iii. 18. To grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* If the least degree of a true and spiritual knowledge of God and Christ be eternal life begun, *John xvii. 3.* certainly we cannot grow in grace but as we increase in that knowledge. If to those who believe Christ be precious, *1 Pet. ii. 7.* certainly to them who increase in faith he will be more precious; and the more precious Christ is experienced to be the more every grace of God's Spirit is strengthened. What a striking proof of this is there in *Ephes. iii. 16, 17, 18, 19.* The apostle begins, verse 14. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man;" and to shew wherein this

this strength consists, he adds, (verse 17. 1st) That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God"—

Doctor Guyse paraphrasing on the last of these verses speaks as follows, viz. of And my hearts "desire for you is, that ye may be enabled yet "more and more to have just apprehensions and "enlarged views by faith; together with an ex-
 "perimental feeling of the virtue, power, and
 "sweetness of the transcendent, free, and love-
 "reign love of Christ, and of God through him,
 "in its most excellent manifestations, fruits, and
 "effects, which in itself and in its wonderful ope-
 "rations, provisions, and designs, infinitely sur-
 "passes all the comprehension and adequate ideas
 "of men and angels, (verse 8 and 10) in every
 "one of the aforesaid boundless dimensions: and
 "all this I beg of God for you, to the end that
 "upon the whole, ye may be still more and more
 "partakers of a divine nature, (2 Pet. i. 4.) and
 "may be enriched as much as possible with all that
 "fulness of light and grace, holiness, joy, and
 "peace in this present life, which God has de-
 "signed and prepared in his eternal councils of
 "wisdom and love, and in the merit of his Son,
 "and

" and has promised in his covenant, and commu-
 " nicates to his chief favourites, at their best sea-
 " sons while they are here." From all which it
 is undeniable that a legal state is a state of spiritual
 death; the legality of the heart therefore which
 still remains, gives the greatest vigor to corrupt
 nature. Were we perfectly evangelical (I speak
 not of doctrine and speculation only) we should be
 perfectly holy and righteous. It is unbelief built
 on legal views and apprehensions enfeebles and
 debilitates grace within us. 'Tis only the appre-
 hension of free and undeserved favor, through a
 mediator, begets and maintains a disposition to
 love and glorify God. As every grace the true
 christian possesses is the effect of mercy, so their
 increase and growth is by the efficacious influen-
 ces of the spirit of mercy, through faith in that
 divine medium of mercy, which the God of mercy
 hath appointed for all, whether saints or sinners
 to look unto. As in justification all the divine at-
 tributes are glorified, because faith alone is the
 instrument, so in sanctification are they also dis-
 played, as through faith every other grace is to
 grow, and at last to be perfected therewith: for
 through him who hath magnified the law and made
 it honorable, the Spirit of the Lord is training up
 those who before were dead in trespasses and sins,
 for a celestial and eternal state of perfect holiness
 and happiness. David when he commanded the
 ark

ark of the covenant to be brought up from the house of Obed-Edom, said, *1 Chron. xv. 13.*—
 "Because ye (viz. the Levites) did it not at the first the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order." Alluding to chap. xiii. 10. where it is said, viz.—
 "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him because he put his hand to the ark; and there he died before God." Thus doth self-righteousness; as if Christ the antitype of the ark needed its assistance, yea as if there were not in him a sufficiency of merit and power. It is no small offence to invert the order of grace, therefore watchfulness in this respect is more necessary than in any other. If there was a particular order in the first actings of each grace, should we not aim at the same order in our actings thereof? If faith be not the leader the whole order is inverted, nay 'tis beyond a doubt that neither of the graces are truly in exercise. We must love God through faith in his love to us, or we shall never truly love him. When our minds then through legal workings would procure his favor and grace, by any thing we imagine is in our power, this brings a death upon our souls; and instead of going forward we are going backward, for we are seeking to justice for salvation instead of mercy, and not in the name of Christ but our own. You will say then is a simple believing the only thing

thing we are to attend to ? God forbid : no, all means are to be used, as prayer, meditation, examination, hearing, reading, christian conference, communicating at the Lord's table, and every other means. But what are all these to the man who has no faith ? Or can they profit him that hath it if it be not properly in exercise ? If not, in every means or duty a due attention should be paid to our graces, that they be exercised in due order ; for the more the believer grows herein, the more will he grow in grace. Paul speaking to the Thessalonians of God's work among them, says, *1 Thes. i. 8. But also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad, so that we need not speak any thing.* Here faith by a figure is put for itself and fruits ; therefore what we have now insisted on we see confirmed. Our spiritual life is not in our own hands, 'tis hid with Christ in God. *Col. iii. 3.* Hence it appears that as it was begun in us, so it must be maintained and increased. It was begun by believing, and must advance by believing : i. e. faith must grow, in order that its fruits may. It is folly to aim at the increase of the effect without regarding the cause from whence the effect must flow. But self-righteousness prompts us to this madness, that it might deprive the Lord of his glory, and set up itself as independent. Faith only honors God and Christ, and the Lord honors faith ; therefore 'tis said *John i. 16. And of his*

fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. But Paul's question to the believing Corinthians determines at once the propriety of this point, 1 Cor. iv. 7. *And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?* After what has been said, some person however may put this question, is the law of no use in the great work of sanctification? Answer, certainly it is: under the influence of the divine Spirit it is useful to shew the christian his wants, that occasion may be given to faith for application to Jesus. As the law is a discovery of the Lord's purity and holiness, it reveals to us our impurity and emptiness. Hence being truly convinced of our vileness and insufficiency, faith is excited by gospel declarations to look unto Christ for righteousness and strength, and for such supplies, the need of which it before perceived not. Now it is not the law which sanctifies, but faith taking occasion by these discoveries to act in a more enlarged and vigorous manner. Law and gospel, if properly viewed and used, mightily profit each other. The law then points from itself to the gospel; and the gospel leads back to the law, as in the hands of a mediator; not as a condemning law, but as a rule of love to God for all his mercies, and to our fellow christians for Christ's sake, nay to our enemies for the Lord's sake. If any be yet inquisitive touching sanctification as a progressive work upon the hearts of God's people, and how it is to be sought and

and maintained, let such acquaint themselves with Marshall's treatise on that subject. In the preceding chapter it was observed that faith in a justified man, is a holy principle and its property is to rejoice in the will of God. Now if this be a truth it cannot by any means be at peace with sinful self, but rather as it increaseth in strength sinful self must necessarily lose ground: because faith being the source of every other grace, they all therefore flourish and increase in proportion as faith itself doth. When natural self at any time prefers worldly ease, honor, and profit to Christ and holiness, then faith contends with it, as much as with the sinful inclination, self-righteousness, and self-sufficiency of our hearts; for the nature of it is to rise above every impediment that stands in the way of God's glory, the soul's spiritual prosperity, and its final salvation: and therefore sanctification advances even by means of the opposition it meets with. Grace certainly is stronger if it enables the christian to maintain his character in truth, under great and fore trials with some degree of propriety, than it was before he was so exercised, though outwardly he appeared more consistent. Nay that the very slips and backslidings of God's people, have led them to that diligence in examination, and have been the occasion so to excite them to, and in the duties of religion, that they have been over-rul'd for good, has been put

beyond all doubt. Though grace may superabound over the aboundings of sin, yet faith never sins that grace may abound. If the christian at any time grow not in joy and comfort, he then grows in self-loathing in renunciation of righteous self, and to a more evangelical confidence in Christ, as the Alpha and Omega of his salvation. What is the effect hereof? Is it not an increased purity and uprightness in his conduct? Were there no sensible stirrings of corruption, grace would be almost dormant. We have seldom an heart to go to God, unless we have some errand. But when our enemies press us we cry the more mightily. It is by victories obtained that grace shines the brighter, and generally our sanctification is most advanced under the greatest oppositions.—But to conclude this chapter I would thus address the believer :—Seek not O christian the increase of this grace through the law and moral duties, but seek it by faith ; the former thou oughtest always to observe and walk in, but it is the latter that quickens. Labor to see what the law requires, then speed thee to Jesus. Keep up a lively sense through believing in Christ of thine acceptance with the Father : this will maintain thy love unto him, and draw out thine heart to trust for sanctifying influence. Let the declarations of the gospel be the warrant of thy confidence, and not thy own feelings. Labor to behold Jesus for every purpose

purpose for which he is set forth. If thou view him as a prophet and a king, let it then be first to teach and enable thee to come to his satisfaction, as thy foundation for acceptance, and then to conform thee to his image, teach thee thy duty, yea rule in and over thee. A conformity to his law is the end for which he was revealed, but thou canst not obtain that end, but by his grace in a way of faith. Sanctification is evidenced by a working from life, not for it; not by the number, but by the nature of our acts of obedience. It appears not in works performed, but in the holy manner of their performance. It is only faith in mercy through Christ begets and maintains, yea increases true love to God: where faith is not, ten thousand moral performances would be of no avail, because love is wanting. When thou treasurest up thy experience, do it after faith put forth, not before it; therefore consider the warrant, ground and nature of thy faith, and then consider its fruits. By these means faith and its fruits may be reciprocally tried one by another. From thy experiences thus deduce thy evidences. Use them to thankfulness and gratitude, but lean not upon them instead of Christ and the free promise. Keep up a lively persuasion by evidence of thy relation to God, but still expect to receive freely the blessings of grace on Christ's account. Otherwise an evidence of interest will be the foundation of thy expectation,

expectation, and not Christ and God's free favor through him. Endeavor also to be persuaded that it is according to God's mercy thou art saved: not only at first by regeneration, but also day by day through the renewing of the Holy Ghost: and look to be saved at last through Christ alone, knowing that whilst in the body thou sinnest in all thou doest.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CONQUEST OF MERCY AT DEATH.

Plalm cxvii. 15. Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints.

THOUGH death to many of God's people appear not with a lovely aspect, yet it performs in their behalf the most friendly office. In their fight their death is not precious, but in the Lord's sight it is so: for it is not the effect of his anger but his appointment as a reconciled Father to deliver them completely from every annoyance. Hence the death of the righteous is compared to a sweet and refreshing sleep. *Rev. xiv. 13.* "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

This

This deliverance then may be said to be

First, A deliverance from the inbeing of sin.—

The death of saints is the death of sin. When the soul quits the body then sin expires ; neither a moment before nor a moment after the believer's last gasp ; otherwise the preciousness of his death would not appear. That these assertions are founded in truth, is obvious from many parts of scripture. Paul speaking in his own, and the names of the believing Corinthians, says, *2 Cor.* v. 6, 7, 8, 9. "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. (For we walk by faith and not by sight.) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." Now if we compare these passages of scripture, with that prefixed to this chapter, then it will appear that death will be an introduction to the believer into a state of consummate holiness and purity.

Secondly, As death delivers from sin, so also from affliction. These are inseparable companions. Though affliction be not a penal evil to God's people, yet it is a fatherly chastisement: but when sin shall be entirely done away every kind of affliction will cease ; for says holy David, *Psalms* xvi. 11. *In thy presence there is fulness of joy.*—

Whence it follows that perfect bliss is the fruit of
perfect

perfect holiness, as tribulation is of sin. Though God deal not with his people whilst in the body, as a God of vindictive justice, their persons being lovely in his sight considered in Christ their head, yet if they be subjects of sin they shall know that he is a God of purity, by his paternal corrections. Though the Lord will glorify his holiness even in the afflictions of his saints, yet he will do it not to their loss but advantage. For we are divinely assured that all their fruit is to take away iniquity, and to render their subjects more like unto their heavenly Father. If as before observed corruption and moral defilement cease with the natural life of the saints, certainly the time of their death is a season wherein mercy is most eminently glorified ; because the objects of its special regard are now perfectly redeemed, in a way of operation, from that grand evil most injurious to God's honor, and from pain its attendant, which is the unhappiness of the creature. Every saint when he enters heaven is the occasion of fresh joy to its blest inhabitants, and demands from them a new song of praise. If there be joy there on the repentance of a sinner, certainly his admission to those mansions of bliss is an addition thereunto. But to conclude. In what way are the people of God to expect this holiness and felicity ? Answer. In the same way they obtained the earnest of it : even by faith. For it is said of the worthies, *Heb.*

xi. 13. " These all died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." If sin did not cleave to the soul even to the last, there would be no room for faith. If in a regenerate man it only cleaves to the body the soul is pure, and faith needless, evidence is only necessary. But on the contrary if the most righteous man upon earth be unfit to appear before God, unless his soul in death be further, yea completely changed, God's glory then requires his trust in the divine mercy, through the satisfaction of Christ, for acceptance and salvation in death as well as in life : for though the last act of the mind may not be an act of faith, yet generally God's people are looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. *Jude* 21. Thus the divine perfections in harmony with mercy are glorified by the believer, both living and dying ; for he assures himself that the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God to be eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Rom. vi. 23*: And therefore expects to receive it as such.

C H A P. XXVIII.

MERCY TRIUMPHANT IN THE RESURRECTION
OF THE SAINTS.

1 Cor. xv. 26. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed
is death.*

THE great object of the slavish fear of believers is death. Though this enemy sorely tries their confidence, yet mercy in the end renders their faith victorious. Indeed the Lord bestows on some of his people much comfort and joy in their dying moments, but then this is not the common lot of his heritage. However death in reference to all may with propriety be placed in the class of conquered foes, since it ushers the soul into eternal life, instead of putting it into the hands of divine vengeance. In this the abridgment of its dominion appears, but inasmuch as it still holds the body captive, it is not wholly deprived of it. That it shall be is demonstratively evident from the resurrection of Christ, who is the Redeemer not only of the souls, but also of the bodies of his heritage. He being their head, and they his members, proves it beyond doubt.—Nay it is obvious from the rule of divine justice,
both

both in rewards and punishments ; as also from many tokens given thereof both in the Old and New Testament. The body being originally immortal, and our whole nature in Christ already glorified, render the same certain, for both soul and body in one person, is by faith a member of Christ's mystical body : nay in that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, affords us the most irrefragable proof of their resurrection. The bodies of the saints are raised by virtue of Christ's merits, as appears from *Hosea* xiii. 14. *1 Cor.* xv. 25. and divers other places ; but not so the wicked, rather by his divine power only, that both body and soul which have sinned, may receive the wages of their iniquity. The efficient cause of the resurrection is the sacred Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit ; but the Son not in his divine nature only, as is obvious from *Rom.* xiv. 9. but in his human also. The bodies of men raised will be the identical bodies, from which their souls departed at death ; for it would not be meet that other bodies which were neither the subjects of moral good or evil, should be exalted or punished. Job confirms this truth, chap. xix. 25,—27. " I know (says he) that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall

behold and not another ; though my reins be consumed within me." But Paul speaks more full to the purpose, 2 *Cor.* v. 10. " For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." If any one be still in doubt touching the sameness of the bodies, which shall be raised, let such consider the omniscience and omnipotence of God. A proper reflection on which will be sufficient to answer every objection on this point.— But to prevent improper ideas respecting the identity here asserted, I would quote the observation of a certain Author on this subject.—“ We may rise
 “ (says he) with the same bodies which we have here,
 “ notwithstanding any change or flux of the parts
 “ of our bodies while we live, or any accident after death. It is agreeable to reason, and to
 “ the observations of philosophers and physicians,
 “ to believe that the bones and muscles, the tendons and nerves, and all the essential and constituent parts of human bodies, are of so firm
 “ and solid a substance, as to suffer little alteration
 “ during our lives, when once they are come to
 “ their full growth and proportion, but to continue the same ’till we die ; and the alterations
 “ which they undergo before men come to their
 “ full stature, is by addition of parts, not by
 “ the diminution of those wherewith we are born.
 “ It

" It appears from a late discourse of a learned
 " physician, that nutrition is a supply of the fluid
 " parts, and that the proper substance of the solid
 " parts suffers no diminution, but in some ex-
 " traordinary cases, and therefore can stand in
 " no need of reparation but in such a case. For
 " the whole body is vascular, or made up of ves-
 " sels and pipes replenished with their several
 " substances, so that in an atrophy the fibres be-
 " come dry, and the nerves and vessels are con-
 " tracted and shrunk, for want of the spirits and
 " juices and liquors, which before filled and dis-
 " tended them. But the solid parts are of so du-
 " rable a substance that they can suffer no dimi-
 " nution, but by such corrosives to dissolve them
 " as must produce ulcers, and such as would affect
 " the fibres with so intolerable pains, that the tor-
 " ments of the stone and gout would be moderate
 " and easy to them, which in a consumption
 " would be universal in all parts of the body;
 " whereas there is no such symptom in any part,
 " and in the greatest consumptions the bones are
 " found to retain their bigness; though a piece
 " of bone is sooner dissolved by a corrosive li-
 " quor such as aquafortis, than muscular fibres of
 " equal quantity and weight. It is wont to be
 " observed upon this subject that when the change
 " of parts is gradual, and in the course of some
 " years, the body may be still the same, as it
 " could

" could not be if the change were made all at
 " once. A ship or house remains the same
 " though it be never so often repaired, and
 " though the materials in succession of time be all
 " or most of them renewed ; whereas if it should
 " be taken to pieces all at once, and all the mate-
 " rials should be changed, and new materials
 " of the same figure and dimensions should be
 " exactly in the same manner framed and built
 " up together in their stead, these would make
 " another house or ship, and not the same that
 " was before. But when the parts which consti-
 " tute the human body, and give it the denomi-
 " nation of the body of this or that individual
 " man, continue the same, the same person has
 " the same body in his old age that he had in his
 " youth, as truly as he has the same body in sick-
 " nefs which he had in health, and the same un-
 " der the languishings of a consumption which he
 " had in his greatest vigor and strength. For the
 " change is only in the variable and accidental
 " parts, which are not necessary to constitute the
 " body of such a man ; and the necessary constitu-
 " ent parts (though they were changed or altered,
 " as in some very rare cases they may be) being
 " so few in comparison of the rest which make up
 " the bulk of a man's body, can hardly be sup-
 " posed by the devouring of cannibals, or by
 " any other accident, to become the constituent
 " parts

" parts of any other man's body. Sanctorius
 " from his Statick Experiments, has observed
 " that a very inconsiderable part of what we eat
 " is turned to nourishment, and from the small
 " proportion which the necessary constituent parts
 " bear to the rest, and the unfitness of them as
 " of bones, &c. to nourish, it may be concluded
 " that little or nothing of that which turns to nou-
 " rishment, can be supposed to be of those constitu-
 " ent parts; and considering farther the great
 " changes which happen in our bodies in the con-
 " tinual flux of parts, and the small proportion
 " again, which the constituent or necessary essen-
 " tial parts have to the rest, we may conclude
 " (supposing those parts as well as others to suffer
 " alteration) that it is the greatest odds that the
 " constituent parts, which turn to nourishment
 " do not by that nourishment, happen to belong
 " to the constituent parts of the man's body who
 " is nourished by them, when he comes to die.—
 " So that if a man should live wholly upon human
 " flesh, which it is not to be believed that ever
 " any man did, yet it would perhaps be above an
 " hundred to one whether any constituent part of
 " his body were made up when he died, of the
 " constituent parts of any other man's body. And
 " besides it must be granted by all that believe a God
 " and a Providence, that a particular Providence
 " may take such effectual care of us, as to reserve
 " to

“ to every man his own body in all the essential
 “ parts of it. The hairs of our heads are all
 “ numbered, that is, they are as well known to
 “ God as they could be to us, if we had told and
 “ numbered them ever so exactly ; and therefore
 “ much more the necessary parts of us are under
 “ his cognizance and care.” Jenkins’s Cert. of
 the Christian Religion, vol. ii. pages 448, 449, 450.

Thus the bodies both of the righteous and
 the wicked, will at the resurrection have the same
 organical parts they had here, without which they
 would not be the same bodies. The circumstance
 which will attend the resurrection of the just is,
 that they shall rise not with the same kind of body,
 that they laid down at death ; no, but on the con-
 trary glorious and spiritual. 1 Cor. xv. 44. *It is*
sown a natural body, (says the apostle) it is raised a spi-
ritual body. Besides, not as in this life subject to
 diseases, infirmities, and accidents, lifeless, and
 impotent ; but instead thereof immortal, glorious,
 powerful, and agile, as the preceding verses
 evince, viz. the 42, 43. for thus is their language.
So also is the resurrection of the dead ; it is sown in cor-
ruption, it is raised in incorruption ; it is sown in dis-
honor, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it
is raised in power. To which add Christ’s declara-
 tion, Matt. xiii. 43. *Then shall the righteous shine*
forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Now
 as the dead in Christ shall be thus raised, so all
 the

the living which believe in him shall be thus changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *1 Cor.* xv. 51. and shall be caught up together with them in the clouds. *1 Thes.* iv. 17. Thus at last are the redeemed of the Lord both in soul and body, to the glory of rich mercy completely delivered from sin and from death. Its unavoidable concomitant raised to a more glorious estate, than was enjoyed before Adam fell; all this effected to the exaltation of every divine perfection, whereby even justice and holiness shine forth with peculiar splendor. Thus the divine Father is glorified as the God of mercy, the divine Son in the great work of redemption which he had effected, wherein alone mercy could be displayed, and whereby it could only be communicated, and finally the Spirit of the Lord is honored, as a spirit of power, by rendering the salvation efficacious and complete, in, and upon the objects of divine mercy.

C H A P. XXIX.

THE GLORIFICATION OF MERCY IN THE
FINAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE ELECT.

2 Tim. i. 18. *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.*

THIS prayer of Paul for Onesiphorous, who as he tells us in the preceding verses, had refreshed him and was not ashamed of his chain, notwithstanding all they which were of Asia turned away from him, but sought him out diligently when at Rome and found him; I say, this prayer does not suppose that the Lord suspends all judgment upon men after death until that last and solemn day of judgment which he hath appointed, but rather proves that that judgment will consist in an open declaration before men and angels, who were and who were not the subjects of justifying mercy in time. For the purport of the apostle's petition was, that this friend who had been so kind unto him, might then appear to be of the happy number whom the Lord here justifies by grace. Justification in the day of judgment evidently supposes and plainly evinces that the gospel and mercy, and not strict justice only, will be the rule of the divine procedure; for should

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it then be enquired who were and who were not in time perfect in themselves, there could not possibly be any such thing as justification in that solemn day of account ; nevertheless the works of those who shall then be justified, must prove that they were perfect whilst on earth in Christ their head. Condemnation on the contrary will then be according to divine justice without the least mixture of mercy ; for those who shall then be condemned will appear to have been not of his sheep. " And I saw (says John the Divine) the dead small and great stand before God, and the books were opened ; and another book was opened which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works," *Rev. xx. 12.* Hence it appears all will be judged.

First, According to the book of God's eternal decrees of love and grace, which is the book of life ; and those who are found therein will be judged according to the gracious effects of justifying mercy. But

Secondly, They whose names are not written in it will be judged by the book of God's divine omniscience, the book of conscience, the book of nature, and that of revelation comprehending law and gospel, agreeable to their various circumstances and privileges in life, but every individual of

them according to his works. The works of the saints will be brought forth as proofs of God's special love and grace. And the dead works of sinners declared as so many evidences of their graceless state, and they themselves be sentenced according to the demerit of their sins, whether mental or external. The present design being to shew the glorification of mercy, and not God's vindictive justice at this awful period, the latter therefore we dismiss. The truth, goodness, and immutability of God, as well as the fearfulness of conscience, shew the certainty of a day of judgment, the efficient cause of which is the sacred Trinity.— Hence it is said, *Deut. xxxii. 36. The Lord shall judge his people.* With which we may compare *Psal. ix. 8. 1. 6.* Sometimes it is attributed to the divine Father, as in *Dan. vii. 9, 10.* “I beheld (says he) ’till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. And a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.— The judgment was set, and the books were opened.” Compare this with *John viii. 50.* and *Acts xvii. 31.* Sometimes it is attributed to the Holy Spirit, see *Isai. iv. 4.* and *Gen. vi. 3.* compared with *John xvi. 8.* But the sacred person then appearing as judge,

judge will undoubtedly be Christ as God-man, who will then declare his divine omnipresence by revealing the hidden thoughts of the heart ; discover his omniscience and convince all of his consummate wisdom, justice, and power ; who according to Paul, *2 Thes. i. 7, 8.* shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire. At whose approach the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up, *2 Pet. iii. 10.* Though this will be a day of inexpressible terror and astonishment to the wicked, *Nah. i. 6.* *2 Thes. i. 8.* yet of unutterable joy to God's people. The saints shall not stand before the judge doubtful of his important appointment : no, neither will he to their shame and disgrace declare before an assembled world their sins and transgressions, for our Lord in the description of that day's process mentions not their sins, but their acts of love, *Matt. xxv.* Nay the promise of free pardon and the divine immutability appear inconsistent therewith, as well as the affection of the judge towards them, who being their redeemer, savior, and advocate, will then bestow upon them a crown of righteousness. Wherefore all the doubtfulness which can then attend the redeemed, will be what seat in bliss may be appointed them, and not a hanging in suspense whether bliss or misery shall be

their portion. They shall be judged by their works, and this in order to evidence

First, The truth of their grace in time.

Secondly, The strength of it.

First, To evince the truth of their grace. This certainly the apostle James alludes to, chap. ii. 18. *Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.* If this then be the case now, if no man can know the truth of another man's faith but by his external conduct, how at the last day should the truth of faith appear, but by the fruit thereof exemplified in the external conduct? Few saints there are but in some external instance or other evidence to the penetrating observer, the grace which hath been bestowed upon them. Now God and angels are privy to what men are ignorant of; all which shall then be revealed, nay the secrets of every heart shall be discovered at that awful period: and therefore not only the external but internal fruits of faith will be displayed and declared by the omniscient judge. As the works themselves of God's people will be then produced, only as so many testimonies that they were indeed in time, the subjects of God's free mercy, that they were justified freely through the redemption of Christ, and that they were

were sanctified by his grace, the attribute of mercy will thereby be eminently glorified. 'Tis true the Lord will reward their work of faith and labor of love, but then it will be a reward only of grace; because were their goodness to be tried by that rule by which wicked men will be judged, instead of deserving a smile they would merit a frown. *Matt. xxv. 30,—40.* As the Lord will judge the evil thoughts, words, and actions of the wicked, so will he reveal the secret inclinations, thoughts, desires and breathings of his people, which his own spirit produced in their hearts, against sin, satan, and the world; and this he will do that it may appear they were vessels of mercy, nay all their groanings under the presence and power of their spiritual adversaries, and make it evident to the whole intelligent creation, that they were justified and sanctified in time; which methinks will be then necessary to evidence the works good of those who made a profession of faith, and to shew that this grace was real in them who possessed it, yet had no opportunity to make a profession thereof. What consolation do these things administer to the humble and tempted christian!—Reader! If thou art one of that number I would fain say to thee, what though thou art now despised by the world, slighted perhaps by God's people, to thine apprehensions rejected by God, and thy hope almost ready to expire, yet
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the Lord will then interpret all the hidden workings of his own grace in thy heart, and shew how dear and precious thou wert in his sight.

Secondly, The Lord's people will be judged according to the purity and strength of their faith. In proportion to grace and faith here, methinks such will glory be hereafter : therefore the nature and number of their works will be searched into. The truth of grace insures their happiness, but the measure of grace constitutes the degree thereof. The more evangelical therefore our works have been in time the greater the opposition ; and the more we have abounded in such works upon every providential occasion, it is highly probable that in proportion thereto so will be our state of glory. Some christians are quite legal and selfish in comparison of others ; they may abound more in moral duties but with little purity, with very little love to God, but on the contrary with much love unto themselves, for the principle, motive and end are essential to a good work. The more of faith the more true love, and consequently the more the glory of God will be simply aimed at. Whilst then we are solicitous to abound in holy duties and works of charity, let us examine how well they deserve these characters. Some think the glory of saints in an heavenly state will be exactly alike. This seems to be an opinion inconsistent with many portions of sacred scripture, as a *Cor.*

ix. 9. where it is thus said : *He which soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.* Again. 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.* Similar passages to which might also be quoted ; but as every saint is what he is in this state, through the mercy of God alone by Christ Jesus, the different degrees of glory in another state must therefore be solely attributed to the sovereignty of divine grace, and not in the least to the creature. 1 Cor. iv. 7. *For who maketh thee to differ from another ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive ? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it ?*

C H A P. XXX.

THE FINAL GLORIFICATION OF MERCY.

Micah vi. 20. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

THOUGH the mercy here promised principally intends that mercy of mercies, even the Lord Jesus Christ, yet in it is contained not only grace but also glory; because Christ is a greater gift than even heaven itself, for the gift of him not only ensures an entrance into glory, but likewise all those unknown blessings which God will bestow even to eternity. Hence it is said, *John i. 4. In him was life*; and he speaking of himself says, *John xiv. 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life.* And hence also Paul puts this notable question, viz. *Rom. viii. 32. How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Plainly indicating the superior worth and excellency of Christ to every thing that can be named. Therefore

Eternal life bestowed on sinful man as it is the accomplishment of mercy, so also as an effect points out its cause, it is the final glorification of mercy,

mercy, in and upon those who were truly the subjects of misery. Hence mercy is built up for ever and the faithfulness of God established: *Psal. lxxxix. 2.* for what can be a stronger proof thereof than to behold those who were condemned to eternal torments, seated on the pinnacle of blessedness; and to find enemies to God become as perfect in their nature as angels in bliss? Is not in this mercy displayed in all its astonishing magnificence and excellency? And do not justice and holiness with exultation rejoice in the omnipotent change? Certainly they do; yea therein the wisdom, power, truth, and faithfulness of Jehovah shine forth with renewed splendor. Here we see the excellency of a promising God, also his glory as the God of providence, who through a series of innumerable seeming contrarieties, hath at last brought his people to the full experience of what as a God of mercy he spoke unto them of.— As then their celestial blessedness glorifies the divine Father, so also doth it the God-man Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ; because it is an experimental proof that all the divine perfections harmonized in his glorious mediation. Paul speaking of the day of judgment says, *2 Thes. i. 10.* *When he (viz. Christ) shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.* O what shining testimonies will they then be of the eternity, immensity, infinity, and co-equality of

Christ with the Father in his divine nature ! Surely a person of less dignity could not have made way for such bliss to be conferred on creatures so miserable and wretched as they were ! And how wonderfully will the spirit of all grace and mercy be then also glorified, who by his omnipotent agency will then appear to have brought about this amazing and most illustrious event ! Nay the Lord Jesus Christ in all his characters, and in the whole of his gracious reign and government, will be then magnified and exalted to eternity. To observe the different acceptations of the phrase eternal life we shall omit, as not suitable to our present purpose, but only consider it as expressive of the most glorious and happy state of existence, even that which the saints shall enjoy with God and the blessed angels after the resurrection. The place of this supreme joy is called heaven ; the beauty and excellency whereof we can but very faintly apprehend, after the utmost stretch of thought aided by revelation : however the farther our ideas thereof differ from those which are gross, sensual, and carnal, the more just they are. Nay the description that holy writ doth give concerning it is only to be considered as figurative, and not as if heaven were like to things of an earthly sort. As a state, it hath various epithets, as peace, joy, salvation, adoption, an inheritance ; and by way of eminency,

nency, life itself; also glory, a crown, and a kingdom: for if Christ be an eternal king it is meet his subjects should live for ever. As a state and a place it is called a city, a house, a mansion, a dwelling place, a granary, a harvest, and divers other things, and sometimes Jerusalem and Paradise. The principal and efficient cause of our entrance therein is the free grace and mercy of God; the meritorious cause, the satisfaction of Christ, as we could not have expected it unless he had redeemed us out of the hands of justice; and finally the instrumental cause thereof is faith in him. To say fully in what eternal life consists is beyond human ability, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Yet we know that it will consist in a freedom from all evil, and an enjoyment of all good. The greatest evil we can labor under, next to the displeasure of God, is a nature inclining us to sin; which in scripture is called the old man, the law of sin, the body of death; from the reign of which believers are delivered even here, but in that state and place of blessedness, they shall be absolutely delivered from the in-being of it. Satan then with his temptations shall no more annoy them, neither shall they be subject to the allurements and frowns of this world, for the wicked will be everlastingly separated

rated from them, and the globe itself no longer subsist as it did in time. As then this glorious state will include a perfect freedom from sin and all temptations to it, so it will consist in an absolute exclusion of all pain, trouble and affliction, for God shall wipe away all tears from the eyes of those who are thus blessed, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. *Rev. xxi. 4.* Thus it appears that all evils relative to body and mind shall be for ever shut out and never more take place on those whom mercy will thus exalt. But positively eternal life will consist

First, In the beatific vision of God. This appears from *Psal. xvii. 15.* *Matt. v. 8.* and various parts of scripture. By the phrase vision of God sometimes is understood that knowledge of his being and existence, which is implanted in the nature of every rational creature. Sometimes that which is acquired by an investigation of the works of nature; nay some understand thereby the knowledge communicated to the prophets in the various modes of revelation. The vision of God which believers enjoy on earth is such a knowledge, that as it differs from those kinds thereof before-mentioned, so also it far exceeds them all in worth and excellency, because it is of
a saving

a saving nature. But the beatific vision of which we now treat is still something more glorious, for though it be not a comprehensive vision after that sort which is peculiar to God alone, and incommunicable to men and angels: yet according to some, it will be such a conception or apprehension which arises from intuition, and proportionate to a finite mind. Doctor Guise paraphrasing on 1 *Cor.* xiii. 12. says, " Yet my way of knowing him and all heavenly objects, will be by a sort of immediate inspection, resembling that with which both he and the holy angels now know me." But more particularly. Not such a vision as implies an adequate knowledge, says St. Augustin, Book 12. of his *City of God*, chap. 18. In which sense the blessed who partake of eternal life do not conceive of God, because he being infinite is infinitely to be known; but they so conceive of him as to constitute that measure of felicity, that God has appointed them. This will be the source of their bliss, for their sight of him will be attended with the most ineffable gladness and exultation, as the most exhilarating conception of the divine favor will be conjoined therewith. The beatitude of the soul will be a perfect knowledge of God and divine mysteries, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. joined with a perfect sanctity of will, 1 *Thef.* v. 23. and a perfect love of God and our neighbour, which will be the immediate fruit of this glorious
and

and beatific vision. To this purpose St. John speaks, *1 John iii. 2.* "Beloved now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." As for the body it will be spiritual, immortal, and incorruptible, impassible, bright and excellent.— Wherefore our Lord saith, *Matt. xiii. 43. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* Wherefore subject to no imperfection; but on the contrary beautiful, agile, and subtil. From these very imperfect observations, touching the celestial state of the saints in body and mind, we may form some faint idea of their internal blessedness. Their external we may suppose will comprehend the sweetest fellowship with God and Christ, angels and one another; yea, with the whole family of the blessed. Hence will arise mutual love, honor and joy; yea, the most ravishing delight. Their bliss will not only be extensive, and that as to variety, continuity, and eternity; but also it will be intensive as to degree, but to what degree who can say? However it will be exceeding sweet and excellent, from the description thereof given in God's word; from the blessed re-union of soul and body, the continuance of felicity, the accumulation of good; and also from the sweetness of the prelibations afforded here; for the very consciousness of their perfection,

fection, and their assured persuasion of the certainty of its eternal duration, will elevate their joy to the highest pitch. It hath been a doubt with some whether God is seen as he is, by any creature whatever. They suppose the divine essence invifible, and therefore conclude that the only fight of God in heaven is through the medium of Christ's human nature. Others have thought different, and have asserted that the beatific vision consists in such a fight thereof as we have before pointed out ; and prove their assertion from various passages of scripture, such as *Job* xix. 26. *Pfalm* xvi. 11. xvii. 15. xlii. 2. *Isai.* lxvi. 18. *Matt.* v. 8. *1 Cor.* xiii. 12. *2 Cor.* v. 7. *Heb.* xii. 14. *Rev.* xxii. 3, 4. as also from what is spoken of, concerning the angels in glory. The case alluded to in reference to them appears much to the purpose ; for our Lord saith, *Matt.* xviii. 10. " Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Now whatever is intended hereby we are sure that glorified saints do, and will enjoy the like blessing, because scripture itself teacheth us clearly that the members of Christ's myſtical body ſhall participate of their felicity. Persons there have been alſo and ſtill are, who have doubted whether one ſaint will differ in degree from another in glory, imagining the thief who was cru-

cified with Christ, and saved just before he expired, to be as highly exalted in glory as Abraham, Moses, David, or Paul. This sentiment is not only contrary to the general opinion of mankind, but methinks differs much from the sacred oracles of truth: as for example, *Dan. xii. 3. Matt. xxv. 21.* Nay, it is quite inconsistent with the promised retribution of works, in a way of grace, *Rev. xxii. 12. 2 Cor. ix. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 8.* And moreover differs widely from the circumstances of elect angels in glory, and the case of the wicked in hell, for we are informed by truth itself that amongst the one there are different degrees of glory, and amongst the other different degrees of torment and misery. Besides who will say that such a sentiment as this is no discouragement from a patient attention to, and study of the will of God? Again. It hath been asked by some, will the bliss of saints in glory be an act, or an habit? Answer. As the beatific vision is held forth in scripture to be the source of all their blessedness, the former seems more probable than the latter: *1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2.* because the nature thereof is the enjoyment of the chief good, and that enjoyment continual and uninterrupted. It hath been questioned also, whether saints in that happy state will know one another. To answer which seems not very difficult, for Adam knew Eve, whom he never before saw, Peter,

Moses

Moses and Elias, when he was with our Lord on the mount of transfiguration. *Matt.* xvii. 3. Nay to suppose any in glory will be unacquainted with those who as instruments, have been of more or less benefit to the church as a body, appears weak and futile; for even a perfection of love infers the necessity of knowledge. If there be in heaven a perfect society, certainly there is a mutual knowledge; and that it shall be still so when their bliss is complete both in body and soul is beyond a doubt; but the mark or character by which they will be known each to the other, hath been supposed to be the degree of glory conferred upon, and peculiar to each individual of them; however this we must look on as supposition only. One remark more I have to make and shall then conclude, which is, that it is the opinion of many that the faculties of saints in glory will be progressively enlarged to eternity, so as to contain more and more glory. To this purpose Doctor Young seems to express himself in the following line:

“What wealth (says he) in faculties of endless
“growth!” *Night Thoughts*, p. 117.

However this may be, we are sure that every saint on his first entrance into glory, is as happy as he can desire; and also when the spirits of just men made perfect are re-united to their bodies, they will be capable of a much larger measure of felicity

than before; yet what the Lord will do, whether he will or will not enlarge the respective capacities of his saints, in that state as before observed, is not for us to determine, unless we had his word to authorize our determination. What concerns us is properly to reflect on, and duly to improve this most glorious subject; how to consider it we have pointed out in the beginning of this chapter. But how to improve it, let us not only reflect on it, but do so with application. If we are still in a state of sin, a due improvement hereof cannot be obtained without an unfeigned concern to be acquainted with our guilt and misery, in order that we may see what danger we are in of being everlastingly consigned over to that state and place, which is just the reverse to what we have now considered. A sinner alarmed though still a sinner is more likely to think of heaven, and the way thither, than an hardened sinner, because the spirit of the Lord first convinces whom he converts, though he does not always convert whom he convinces. Now to be truly solicitous to know and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, by a true and living faith, (which none but a convinced sinner will do) to increase and grow in such a faith is certainly to improve this subject, not only to our own advantage, but also to the honor and glory of the divine perfections. Wherefore O believer! Be concerned to get more of the life of
 God

God in thy soul. Study more the freeness, fullness, and perpetuity of the divine love and grace. Be not contented to hear of the things of God and Christ and the salvation of his people, but be concerned to partake of them, nay to be the subject of their blessedness. Meditate much on the cardinal points of divinity, as faith and love : these comprehend all other graces, and are the source of every good word and work. The first, by depending on the Lord for favor and strength, invigorates the latter the offspring thereof, to live unto God's glory. Thy love if true will be always in proportion to thy faith. Therefore if thou wouldest increase in love, thou must increase in faith, and in this way only seek to increase in every other grace. Art thou desirous to enjoy greater and clearer evidences of interest in the salvation of God's people, and that thy conversation may be more becoming the gospel of Christ ? Surely this is the only mean to obtain so glorious and desirable an end ; for the more life, the more action. These observations will suit the weak and the strong, the afflicted and the joyful. Yea, be thy case whatsoever it may, through Christ the way of the Lord's appointment, thou hast encouragement to hope for the heavenly inheritance ; for though thou mayest be ever so low and mean in thine own esteem, thou hast a perfect latitude
of

of hope in the gospel: not only to be thereby
saved, but that this abundant assurance may be
adorned unto thee; into the everlasting king-
dom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Pa-
ter, which I pray may be the happy life both
of thee and me. Amen.

was in proportion to the faith. Therefore if
unto God's glory. Thy love it was will be al-
lowed; and the latter the offering thereof to live
in glory on the Lord for favor and strength.
The love of every good word and work. The faith
which comprehend all other graces and all other
cardinal points of divinity, as faith and love;

The END.

[illegible]

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